

This booke was compyled by dan John Lydgate monke of
 Burpe / at the exaltacion and styrng of the noble and
 victorouse pryncer / kynge Harry the fyfthe / in honoure
 of the treuener of the byrthe of our moste blessed lady / maye
 byf / and moder of our lord Ihesu cryst / chapytre as foloweth
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o Thoughtful brede plunged in distresse
With fether of south this long winters night
Out of the sleep of mortal sluggishness
Awake anone & take upon the light
Of thyllke sterre that with her beame bright
And with the shynynge of his stremes merke
Is wont to glade al our empyre



And to oppresse the dulle and the doole
Of brayn betis that forlorn and syghen oft
I mene the sterre of the bright poole
That with her beame when she is aloft
May al the trouble assuage and assote
Of worldly walwes whiche in this mortal see
Hath be bysette with grete aduersite

The rage of whiche is so tempestuous
That when the calme is moste blandishynge
Then is the sterre of deeth moste peribous
That he want the light of hir shynynge
And but the sight alas of hir beynge
From deethis bynke be to asape
The haue of lye of be may not betake

This sterre in beaute passeth playdes
Bothe of shynynge and of stremes cleere
Poetes and artiz and also jades
And esperis when hit doth appeere
For this is spica with her bright spere
That toward euen at mydnyght & at morowe
Down from heuyn adalveth al our sorowe

Whos bright beames shynen fro so fere
That cloudes blacke may the light not sterne
For this of Jacob is the fayre sterre
That vnder walwes neuer doth decerne
Whos cours is not vnder the ecliptike lynne
But euer like of beaute may be seyn
Amid the arke of our meridyne

And dyeth by the holier kyngs blood
Of auncient after the meane of grace
That he is keepyng us on floure flake
In lyste apulle and in fuffe maye
And answere pithus the bright sonnetis daye
With his swayne goldenen bright and fayre
To enchaunt the mystes of our choudy ayre

For this is the sterre that hathe the bright sonne
Whiche holdeth the spere of iuda in his honde
Whos stames ben out of Jesse womne
To shede hys light to the in see and londe
Whos glady tyme without echspynge stonde
Esward to be in the orpent ful stene
With light of grace to hope of our tene

Molt fayre sterre / o sterre of stertis alle
Whos light to see aungelis deale
So lat the golde delbe of thy grace falle
In to my breste lyke scales faye and lyght
Me to ensyre of that I lyght endyte
With thykke salme sent down by myracle
Whan the holy ghoost the made his tabernacle

And the spoure of thy grace shere
In to my penne to enlumyne this dytre
Therwith thy supporte that I may ptoorde
Somewhat to say in laude & praysonge of the
And first I thynke of thy natyure
So that thyng helpe from me not abynde
Gyngne lady anon to begynne

The natyure of our lady capitulo

primo

Flour of wheat full large kept by choos
a Full made was with holson trys so
Only by grace upon the flatter awes
Out of Jesse springing from the wit
Of gods ordynance to be refuge and sol
Unto mankynde our trouble to detrempe
Full large before by perscience digne

The which flour perfecteth man fro deth
Unto the flour who so lyst take hede
That in a gardyn amyd of nazareth
So fayr somtyme gan to springe and spede
That thowld the world bothe in lengthe & berte
The freshe odour and also the swetnesse
Herthis comforteth of al her drynesse

O nazareth whyth Bethlem the besyde
This flour the maketh of name more spede
Than outhere come elate and full of pryde
Or myghty troy with the stourde wall
Whos renoun holdeth to be perigalle
In honour prayr fame or reuerence
Unto your passenge worthy excellence

Yf for the fruit comendyd be the tre
Thou hast more laude and commendacion
For thyllke flour springe out of the
Than hath auffrike or worthy sappon
Of come Cefar or of fabyon
Though her names were somtyme graue in golde
Her ydel fame to thyn may not be tolde

Therefore triumphe and be right glad and light
O nazareth of name most flouryng
For out of the flour most fayr of sight
Most full of grace somtyme dyd springe
Of the which fully remembryng
So longe agone spake holy ysay
When that he sayd in his prophete

That on this floure playnly shold ryle
The holy ghost for his chosen place
As for the fargest and also for the beste
That ever was and most ful of grace
Whose passage haue no stormes may deface
But ever a lyke continueth fassh of hille
Withouthy fadyng the colour is so talle

For this is the floure that godd hym self helle
The whete lode of the chosen vale
The swete wofe of the faye felde
Whiche of colour wayneth neuer pale
The bysshet our langoure to auale
Curpyl helpe theowly mercy and pyte
To secoure al that in myscheyf be

And from the stocke of ioachim and anne
This holy floure had his orygynall
To hym asow by signe y helpe the wshan
The aungel tolde him playnly that there shal
Of him be borne a mayde in speciall
Chosen of god most chere of her asye
And for his mekenesse bryght that maye

And wshan the aungel at the roke of golde
Hady of this maye the byrth reuerend
And at the maner of him to the tolde
In looke olde as it is speake
Dome to her holde anone they haue hym sped
And the conceyue this faythful in the wyf
By ioachim the holy faye of lye

Out of the which godd growbe ad our ome
Our olde sowles fassy for to spene
The bytter galle playnly to enche
Of the byrm allye serpentyne
For that wshan anne had merthies ryne
Beane this faye so holy and entere
Theowly the grace of god anone hit dyd appere

In the orient to glad al mankynde
With dedely enour oppressed of the nyght
With clothes black/and with shyns stynde
Tyl they were cleryd with faynes of the lycht
Of the which the aungel somtyme had: a lycht
With Jacob lymstynge from hym as he leaped
So longe aforne to hym whan he sayed

Let me departe withouten more assaye
Ageynst me and make no dyscrent
The nyght is passed/so the morowe gynneth
The fusthe aurore so fage in apparance
Hir lycht dalbyth to boyds al offenc
Of wynter nyghtes ful long and trespous
With nelbe apperyng so glad and gyncous

This is to saye the holy dalbyng
Of thys mayde of hys natyure
The nyght gan boyds of our old mannyng
As the Aungel in fygure dyd see
With such a touch made Jacob le
Sore in his fenelbes lyke as it is founde
In thys member where lust doth moost haounde

In fygure only that here shold sprynge
Dolbe by dyssent oute of his hymene
A clene mayd in mylke and in lychtynge
Chure of entent both in thought and orde
With aurore with his semes rede
The nyght auoyded with his coys donne
Afore the byperst of the bryght sonne

Myght so thys mayd at hys natyure
The nyght of dech auoyded both alwaye
And bryght calendys moost lusty for to see
Of cythrus byperst withouten more delays
For he is aurore soberly this is to saye
Oute of which as pophetes gan deuyse
The sonne of lycht to be gan fyrst deuyse

Of laces by the ful many a day before
Attemperat laces in speciall
And sayde a mayde sayde that it shoulde
Come the signe a laces whiche
That sayde is the signe the signat
The which mayde as it eke telle may
That her a chere without spots of may

And as mynerva moder of pender
He hold a mayde right so this brerly quene
Gave in her laces the fader sayde
And moder was and mayde chere
Of gode prouidede playnly fader say
Socour to man and help in al our nece
Whan she was borne this flour of laces

Hold our lady was offryde
in to the temple capitol atre

a And after that yere as was the blage
Dir moder payde the laces as in folowynge
And than anone in her tender age
Went to the temple devoutly they her bringe
And into god they made offerynge
Of this mayde for to abyde there
With other maydens that in the temple were

And not with laces her passing tendresse
Dir gune pouthr but of pous the
The old goddis laces this bunch of holynesse
With laces laces went to gwe by gwe
Tefane alse that al mayden see
Tefane that out of so gwe an laces
And when her moder thew laces a laces

For betray Ioye anone she felle a dole
And said thus that al myghten her
God from aboue hath herde myn cryson
Of his goodnes and graunted my prayere
And comfortid myn oppressed chere
In sight of hem that boosen at my payne
And of malice gan at me dysdayne

Now hath he ben my singular refuse
To my tryssesse consolacion
For he hath made the bawyn to her faute
Therow his myghty dyspicion
And maad clew my confusion
And alle my lioo for to ouergoon
Only by grace amyd alle my soyn

And therow his myght the hertes hath bolvyd
Of hem that gan to chaace at me by pryde
Wherefore she hath vnto god auolvyd
That hir doughter shal in the temple abyde
The holy ghoost for to been her guyde
For euermore by goddes purueaunce
Therow hyr mekenes hym to do plesaunce

Forth al her lyf there to slepe and washe
Hym for to serue wyth humble payntnesse
That al maydens myght ensaunple take
Of hyr allone to lyue in clenness
And specially of hyr mekenesse
Wemygne port countenaunce and chere
If that hem lyst of hyr they myght lere

Ful of vertu deuoyde of alle outrage
Hyr herte was that god to dwelle in chere
And day by day right as she lyeve in age
Right so in vertu gan she to encrece
And myght ne day holdy she neuer grace
To exclud shutte and byes to lerne
With honte to worche or wyth mouth to purge

For but in god her brede nought desired
She upon hym entirely was her thought
And from alow by grace he her visited
That every thing but hym she sette at nought
Of worldly lust she hath so hert thought
That out of mynde she let hit ever flyde
That nought but god may in her abyde

And when that she y^e yere dyd attayne
She was as sad in conuersacion
And also demure soothely for to sayne
From al chyldesche and dissolucion
In gouernaunce and in discursion
And in talkyng as wyse and as sage
As ony mayde of thirty yere of age

Of the conuersacion of our lady in the Temple

And of hir rule this was hyr vsage
From day to day this holy mayde entyere
From pryne at morn by contynuaunce
Tyl ther of the talle to be in hyr prayere
And tyl the sonne was at mydday spere
On golde and siluer & on bulles softe
With hir handes she wolde wyrcle ofte

And euen at none to brynge hyr hyr fode
From god aboue ther was an aungel sent
Whiche that she took as for her lyfode
Thankyng hym ay wyth al her hert entred
And after mete anon this mayde is went
Agayn to praye tyl plenus went to rest
And at euery with hym she took her rest

This lyf she laded & this cours she gooth
In whom was neuer yet fonde offence
And neuer man salbe this mayde thwoun
But ever meke and ful of patience
Of herte cleue and pure of conscience
This lyf she lad & as lokis treke
Of wordes selbe & wonder softe of speche

Ther mete also that was to hyr brought
Out of the temple for hyr sustenaunce
With herte glad & with a purpse thought
To poure & neddy that lyued in penaunce
To penne hit frely was at hyr plesaunce
And who that euere of hir had a syght
Of al dyscase was made glady and lyght

And euery byght greued with sickness
A touche of hyr made hem hole anone
And they that were in thought & in distress
When they hyr seye hyr maner was a goone
And thus she was to euerychoone
Of al myschepes refugit and remedye
With a beholding of hyr goodely eye

And of this mayde eke as it is tolde
Hyre goodely face was so ful of lyght
That no man myght susteyne to beholde
For hit was clerer than the sonne bryght
That the crowne in the wynters myght
Of adrynne ne of the steris leuen
To hyr faynes ne by not for to neuene

Yet neuere man temptyd was to synne
While he behelde on her goodely face
The holy ghoost so hool was hit within
That al enuyton spradd gan his grace
Where that she was present in the place
For alby god gaf hyr to hir presence
So fulsom lyght of quene's influens

Ne none so fayre was neuer founde in tyme
As was that mayde of Iuda and? Spon
The daughter chosyn of Iherusalem
Of dauphtis fete to be fete allone
Of al maydenes to reherne hem euerychone
She hure the prife as wel in faynesse
As she exaltid in vertu and? goodnesse

Let be thou grete and speke not of Eleyne
Ne thou Trope of ponge pollorne
Ne come of Lucresse with her eyen threyne
Ne thou cariage of thy fressh quene
Dido that was somtyme so fayre to see
Let be your boote & take of hem none hede
Whos beaute fayeth as flour in frosty mede

Hester was meke but not to hyr mekenesse
And Judith wyse but she yet dyd exalte
And? herlate of grete semelynesse
And Rachel fayre Jacob can you telle
But she allone of womanhode the welke
Of counte beaute that neuer fade may
Nought like a flour that flouresseth but in maye

Passith echone tothe mygh and? ferre
Werke in faynesse and? in perfection
Right as the sonne doth a litel sterre
And as the Rubye hath the renoun
Of stones al and? domynacion
Right so this mayde to speke of holynesse
Of wymmen alle is lady and maistrisse

Of whom spake somtyme wyse Salamon
In sappenur who so list to see
That she was chosyn for hyr self allone
This wyght tollue with her eyen meke
Whos chere wyren her beaute for to eke
With alpes meynur & fressh roses red
This is to say who so may take heed

First with the rose of womanly sufferance
And with the fayr lily next of chastite
She was ennelvyd to geue hir sufferance
As wel in goodnes as in beauty
And as he sayth she fayrer was to see
Than outhir pallas platy or lucyne
With hornes ful of hony whan they shyne

And of this mayde as saynt anathme sayth
In his writyng hir beauty to compare
Of face fayr but fayrer yet of sayth
He sayth she was this holy pure virgyne
Whos chaste herte to no thyng dyd encline
For al hir beauty but to holynesse
Of whom also this auctour sayth expresse

That she was daughter of dauid by dissent
Starre of the see and goddis olde anathe
Euen in this world alibey of one entant
And goddes spouse his bestys to fulfille
And euer redy for to do his wyll
Cristis temple and also receptacle
Of the holy ghoost and chosen tabernacle

The pater of heuen and also the fayrenesse
Of wyymen al who so loketh a nyght
Of maydenhode lady and pynesse
One of the fyue that haue her lampes light
Redy to mete with her spouse at nyght
Ful prudently alwaytynge at the pater
That for no slouth she came not to late

In figure eke the chaundeler of gold
That somtyme haue seuen lampes shene
This is to say the temple of the hode
Of god preferyd for she was so clene
Though her myght endelbed for to lene
By grace of hym that is of polver moeste
With the seuen yeres of the holy ghooste

Both our lady receyved the fyny pfects
of the holy ghost myghty

quinte

The first pfect was the pfect of durt
To eschewe eche thyng that shal god displese
The next pfect of vnyng womanshede
To vntre on al that she salbe in dyscase
The thred conyng god/and man to please
The fourth sturynge the thowld hyr stedfastnesse
Onely by vertu al vices to oppresse

Of countyll eke she had excellence
To kepe hyr pure in byrgynpeth
For on wiche countyll alped is prudence
Of vnderstandynge eke the pfect had she
For god hym self chose wiche her to be
And of wysdome so god lyse hyr auance
To knowe eche thyng that was to his plesance

She was also the Trene Boyd of synne
That stondyth so ryal in goddes owne syght
To foure whiche seven lampes burne
With tuenty fyre so spyrtyual of lycht
That neuer wast but euer alyche bryght
Conteynyn in one hert above in heuyn
By the whiche trene and the lampes seven

She vnderstande this mayd most entere
Wiche seven vertues that in her were founde
That somtyme burne wiche ghostely light so clere
Thowld lycht of vertu inwardely to counde
Only thowld be grace that vnd in her shounde
And al they were grounde in mekenesse
Her lycht is god more plesantely to dresse

For faith in hir had a ground so fast
That hit was hope of al doubtlesse
Hir hope of trise was also mayntenaunce
Rooted in god by purgatorie fire
Whose charite so large gan hym dresse
That by to god by hastyd came the fere
With herte of clennesse to al by desire

Stronge in herte prudent in gouernance
She had also conuynge with clennesse
And souerainly she had attymptuance
In al her werkis with gude aduysednesse
And euer annexed vnto rightnesse
Within her herte of womanly bounde
She had of custome mercy and pite

Solifast ensauple also of chastite
As saith ambrose she was in thought & dede
And twelue myroure of byrgynite
Of poore benygne ful of hylite
As humble of chere and sempyne of dede
Prudent of speche of what she list to seke
Large of sentence and but of wordes fewe

To praye & reue that was euer her lye
Of herte wakere by deuotion
To god alwey with thought contemplatyf
Ful feruent euer in her entencion
And ydel neuer from occupation
And specially to almesdeed
Hir hande was euer redy at the need

And ful she was of compassion
To reue in al that felt wo or smerte
Wel mysted euer with hote affection
To euery myght so longe was hir lerte
Sadde with al this that hir neuer oferte
A woode a mye of hir eyn fere
So close of sight was this deuote

And in psalmes of holy prophete
To see and see the founte most depe
And when she sawe and founte in Ise
Of castys byrthe holt & dyde byrthe
To god she left her tender handys byrthe
Besetynge hym the myght abyde and see
The blessful day of his natyvyte

And in the booke of elyzabeth
That tpykedy is of her ansyons
I fynde holt thys mayde of nazareth
Sayde every day seven orisons
That calledy ben hir petitions
With humble herte this blessful yonge mayde
Ful holtly knelyng every thus she sayde

Holt our lady prayde to god for seven
petitions capitule quinto

o Blessful lord that knowest the entente
Of every herte in thy eternal sight
Gyve me grace the first comaundement
To fulfille as it is skpylle and right
And graunte also byth herte wyll & myght
And al my solle and al my knowynge
The for to hve above al othet thyng

And gyve me myght playnly to fulfille
The next bydyng like to thy plesaunce
And for to hve with herte and al my wyll
My neyghbour in dede and countenaunce
Right as my self with every circumstance
And hertlyshal for ioye woe or smerte
What thou shalt to hve with al my herte

Thy precept graunte eke that I may
Fulfille also to the end and late
In such maner as mooste is to thy paye
Benygne lord and make me for to haue
Mankynde so for he maad first debate
In kynde of man and made hym to traspare
Aynst the and to lose his grace

And lord graunt me for thy mercy dygne
Aboue al thyng for to haue mekenesse
And make me humble sufferant & benygne
With pacience & Inward myldnesse
Of al vertues geue me eke largenesse
To be acceptyd the to queme and serue
To fynde onely thy grace I may deserue

And also lord wyth quakynge herte & dreme
Meekely I praye vnto thy deyte
Me for to graunte of thy goodlyde
The gracious ouer for to abyde and see
In whiche the holy chosen mayden stode
In to this world here after that he tode
Lyke as prophete hath writen here before

Holw that she that by thy election
Be mayde and moder to thy sone deie
Now good lord here myn oryson
To kepe myn eyen and my sight entyre
That I may see hir holy halowyd chere
Hir sakerid beaute & holy countynaunce
Yf thou of grace list me so moche auaunce

And kepe myn erys that they may also
Here hir speche & hir dallyaunce
And with my tongue speke that mayden vnto
Paciently thowld hir sufferaunce
Of worldly ioye this were sufferaunce
And hir to loue like as I desyre
Benygne lord so set myn herte asyre

And lord also on me saue thou touch
Though I thereto haue no wordynesse
That holy mayde to handyl and touch
Myne olde lady and my maystresse
And that I may with humble bugumnesse
Upon my feet in al my best wyse
Goo vnto hir for to do seruyse

And to that skurre of breggynge
Graunte also lord that I may haue space
Meekely to folde & knele vpon my knee
Vnder supporte onely of hyr grace
And to honour the goodly yonge face
Of hir sone as she dothe hym waupe
In clothys softe liggynge in hir lappe

And loue hym best playnly to my laste
With al myn herte & myn hole seruyse
Withoute change while my lyf may laste
Right as thy self lord canst best deuyse
So that I may in faythful humble wyse
In al this world nomore grace attayne
Than loue hym best with al my myght & payne

And to thy grace also lord I praye
To graunte me to fulfille in dede
Hooly the statutes and meekely to obey
Within the temple as I see hem rede
For but thou helpe I may no thyng speede
As of my lyf & therfore vnto the
Alle I comyt as thou list it be

The obseruaunces & the preceptis alle
That to thy temple o lord ben partynent
So let thy grace by mercy on me falle
That I may do hem with al myn hole entente
And euery byddynge and comaundement
That thy mynysters assigne vnto me
Make me fulfille with al humylyte

And thy temple & thy holy house
Wengne lord kepe me from al damage
And make thy peple to be vertuous
To thy plesaunce of euery maner age
The for to serue with herte & hoole corage
And where they erre / lord on ony spe
Or thou do right let mercy be her guerd

And thus this mayde all her day by day
In the temple maketh hir prayris
To plesse god what she can or may
The chiefe resort of al her desires
Tyl she attayne to fourtene yris
With herte auolbyd to the in thought & dede
For to contynue in her maydenhede

Of whos entent god wote ful wel in that
Werren some of them that in the temple abyde
Of whiche a bisshopp calld abpathar
Cast hym fully for to sette a spe
Hir purpos playnly and so for to proude
That her auolbe maad of chastite
Shold not holde but vterly that she

Shold be weddid sothely yf he myght
Wnto his sone of hygh affection
For that she in euery wyghtes sight
So passenge good of condiaon
And to fulfille his entencion
Abpathar byhoath golde and rent
To the bisshoppis to make her to assent

To this purpose & to hir they gone
And what they may they gan hir eyen
And to offerme to hir euensone
With sugrid tinges of many wordes whiche
That god above doth hym more delecte
In birthe of children than in virgynite
Or ony such auolbyd chastite

And more in children is honoured in certayn
And more in hem hath he his plesaur
Than in such as ben not but certayn
Without fault thowld mysgouernaunce
And holy writte makith remembraunce
That no man was sothely for to telle
Without seede blessed in Israelle

To whome anone with hoke down caste & chere
Benygne & in ful humble wyse
This holy mayde sayd as ye shullen here
Certes qd she yf ye wel you auyse
Whiche in your self so prudent ben and wyse
And wel aduerte in your discretyoun
That atel somtyme had a dolyf croune

One for his faithful trewe sacrifice
Offryng to god of humble herte and free
And another as I shal deuyse
For he his body kept in chastyte
And Elye as ye may rede and see
For he in herte was a mayden cleane
He was rauysshed aboute the sterres souene

Body and alle in a chace of fyre
For he hym kepte from al corrupcion
Therefore in Rayne is playnly your desyre
To speke with me of this oppynion
For god wel knoweth myn entencion
Holt I haue folowyd as it to hym is couthe
To be a mayde fro my tender youthe

And al my lyf so forth to perseuere
For lyf or deith onely for his sake
From which purpos shal I not disseuere
Thowld his grace whether I slepe or wake
To here and holde I haue undertake
My maydenhede sithen goo ful yow
Ageyn which ne spekith to me nomore

And when they salbe her herte not mistakle
But euer stedfast of one affection
And euer eliche as ony centre stable
They haue made a conuocation
Of al the kynredes in conclusion
The eyght day for to come in fere
By one assent to terte of this matre

This is to say that of olde vsage
Of custome kepe for a memorialle
That e uery mayde of fourtene yere of age
Rich and poure of the stocke wall
In the temple no lenger dwelle shall
But by statute shal be take and married
By the salbe and no lenger tard

And when they were assembled al in one
Isaac in oppn audyence
Gan to pronounce afore hem euerychone
Ful prudently the some of his sentence
And said sitte with your patience
So hit your eris offende not ne greeue
Declare I shal my menyngge with your leue

Yf ye remember sithen salamon the kynge
Of Israel cepte here and croune
In this temple so yal in byldyng
Haue yong maydens by deuyfion
Of custome had her conuersacion
Bothe kynges daughters & prophets eke
As ye may fynde yf ye list to seke

But to the age of fourtene yere
Abeyden here and no lenger of space
As ye wel knowe withouten ony lere
And than be remeuyd from her place
And in her stede other dyd par
As custome was & eke in her kynage
Deluyerd was into mariage

And as a lalbe hit hath be kept ful twelue
Unto this tyme in hygh & lowe estate
But nold manie hath fonde an ordre nelbe
To kepe her clene and Jmynolate
A yense whiche there helpith no defaute
For of fre chose and heretly volunte
She hath to godd auolbed chastyte

Wherefore me semeth it were wel sittynge
To hir purpose by good discreffyon
First that we myght fully haue knowynge
Of goddis wille in this oppynyon
For thene hit were a more perfection
Hir clene entente as sempth vnto me
And eke the stronger of auctorite

First that we myght knowe trawly
To whos keepynge she shal comytte be
And they assenten her to trawly
Withoute n more of hygh or lowe degre
And of accorde & of one wyte
The prestes al begonnen to procede
To cast lotte down by eche kynde

The whiche lotte on juda felle anone
As I suppose thraugh goddis purueaunce
And Isacar amonge hem euerychone
Purposid hath a nelbe ordynaunce
That euery wyght of that assemblaunce
That wyffles were withouten more delaye
Shold brynge a yerde agayn the next daye

And to the bishopp hest of rethone
Eueryche of hem dody his yerde brynge
Amonge whiche Ioseph had brought one
Though he were olde & passid his bypnyge
And he anone maad his offerynge
To godd aboue and a sacrifice
In the olde lalbe such as was the guyse

And god to hym thenne dyd appere
And with the yerde sad that he shold goon
And put them euerichoon in fetter
In sancta sanctorum siggynge one by one
And in the morow to come agerh othone
Euerich his yerde to wraue agerh
And vpon which yerde onely were seyn

A dolue appere and vpon to heuen fies
He shal haue without more obstacle
Marpe in keepynge so fap vpon to see
As it is right for the hygh myracle
And when they come to the tabernacle
As ye haue herde the bisschop deuoutly
Euerich his yerde despuerd by and by

But vterly vpon none them of alle
At thylke tyme was there no thynge seyn
For goddes leste was nought y y falle
Of her desyre to put hem in ardyn
Wherefore the bisschop with nelbe fere agayn
Entred is in to the sepntuarie
And whyle that he a whyle there gan tarpe

Goddys aungel aperid to hym nelbe
Down fro heuen by myracle sent
And tolde playnly the leste of god was farbe
But how hym self was somwhat negligent
For to despuer by comaundement
Euery man his yerde as he oughte
And when the bisschop aright hym besoughte

He gan remembre playnly in his mynde
That of dyscayne and wyllful negligenc
The yerde of Joseph was left behynde
Whereby he knelbe that he had doon offence
And gan anone to bryng hit in presence
And took hit Joseph deuoutly in his honde
Amonge hem al there they dyd stonde

At behynde disseynted from the pree
With humble chere in the lowest place
And of this yerde in maner recybles
Ful styll of poore wyth a dredful face
And whan he did with his hande embrace
His yerde ageyn ful deconayr of booke
For Innocence of humble durt he quoke

And sodenly thagh gonre aboute deupne
All openly in every wyghts sight
Upon the yerde of Joseph ful benygne
Was seen a dollue of fetheris tply wyghte
That towarde heuyn took the flight
And with one voye the peple tho astayde
And vnto Joseph al attounce sayde

Blessed art thou & blessed is thy chaunce
Thy face blessed & thy aduenture
And blessed is thy humble attendaunce
And thou art blessed so longe endure
For to possede so fayr a creature
So good & so holy nold in thy passyng age
So clene a mayde to haue in mariage

And she anone by presteis of the lalbe
Assigned was vnto his gouernaunce
But helpe Joseph gan hym to withdraue
With humble chere & shamefast countenaunce
And said wroth there is none accordaunce
Oftwene his yonghe florissyng in fayrnesse
And me whom age with vnlust doeth oppresse

For she is fayr & freshe as rose in maye
And wel I wote also a mayden clene
And I am olde with whete lockis graye
Chassid ful for my tynge peris guene
Wherfore I praye you to consydre and sene
To accorde discordaunt saith to me nomore
Oftwene his beaute & my lockis hore

And when the byshoppsalbe the humble entent
Of this Joseph and the Innocent
And how that he to take her noder assent
To hym he sayd in oppn audgenc
Joseph he sayd take hee to my sentenc
And he wel warr that thou the not excuse
Agayn the wyll of god for to refuse

This holy mayde assigned Into the
By oppn signe whiche al the peple seye
Thorough goddis grace & myghty helpe
A yense whiche beliaar to dissolve
And thynke how he soueraine maad to dye
A siron and dathan ouerly for the offence
Doon to hym of Inobedgenc

Quod Joseph that wyll I not in no thyng
To goddis wyll ne hiddynge contayne
But hir accept me to my keepynge
For whom god hath shewyd signes farr
Whiche is so good keepynge and dehonage
That I to hyr wyll seruaunt be & gude
Tyl for hir goddys lyste set to pryde

And as the custome of the lawe hem bounde
So maad was the confirmation
By kyng of wedlok becomen hem bounde in bond
And he hir took to his possession
With herte clene and meke affection
But whyle he went to bethel the cyte
Marge abode styll in galilee

Holb Joseph Wyde the craft of
a carpenter: capitall

12

a Nazarite in her fathers holbe
Looke hir auolbe of hirt allbey in one
And foure maydens the moste virtuous
Of the temple were chosen out anone
Of the bishopp with hir for to goone
To dwelle on hir by humble attendaunce
In what they can to serue and doo plesauce

Of which the first callyd was repha
And Sappha the seound as I fynde
Susanna Zabel and Abigea
The other thre as bookes maken mynde
Which shold neuer theowld shewt be beyonde
But as in one as it is spewfynde
In werke and prayer were occuppye

And vnto hem as made is mencion
That of lpyngg so saythful weren & true
And diligent in occupation
Desyerd was sylke of sondry helpe
For to make dyuerse werkis welbe
In the temple of Intencion
Onely to be in mynstacion

And as it is put in remembraunce
Euerich her sylke took by aduenture
Like as her hande fel theow by chaunce
But maye as god the shope hir elbe
The purpyle sylke took in to hir care
Of gracious hope of sorow without sight
The which colour of custome and of right

To none estate is knyghtly setting
Of doubt to speke in special
But to the state onely of a kynge
So that no wyght but of the stocke royal
By statute orde this colour: Be that
For by olde tyme ye shold: no man se ne
In purppl cladde but othwer kyng or quene

Wherfore the force ful rightfully is falle
Merely by the disposition
Upon marie that before hem alle
By agne right is disandred: down
Of blood: ryalte and by election
Of god: aboue was chosyn for to be
For his merite of heuen and erthe quene

And moder eke as ye shal after see
Of thykke kynge that was clad: in red:
Of purpnr helbe sothe face and cirt
Down to the foot from his blessed: bred:
Whan he of purppl dyd: his luter spred:
On caluarge awood: Upon the croce
To saue mankynde: whan he shedde his blod:

And of this purppl that I spake of tofore
I fynde playnly: how that marie brought
Thilke kyng that was on libeyne borne
The same our: whan he so dre: be brought
To how that god: in his eternal thought
Prouyded hath by Just purueaunce
The purppl like to his moders chaunce

How our lady is sette for an ensample
of Virgynne capite

ccimo

8 Not nolt I true this blessed mayde deu
In nazareth amonge hir frendis to dwelle
Ledynge a lyf more parfyte ande chere
Than any tonge suffyse may to telle
For euyn like as a fulsum welke
Shedde his stremys in to the ryuer
Right so marie an ensaunpeler cleue

Pass to alle by plenteuous largenes
Onely vertu vpon euery spede
O wel were they to whom thou wert maistres
And blessed eke that myght on the abyde
To haue by ensaunple so vertuous a gyde
And blessed was that holy compagne
That day by day the saw with hir eye

And blessed was the paleys & the holbe
In which thou haddest thy holy macion
Fortuned wel & wonder gracious
So humble was thy conuersacioun
And blessed was also al the towne
Where thou abode & blessed the byllage
O holy mayde where thou haddest hostage

And blessed was the worthy table riche
Where day by day thou wentest vnto forde
For in sochnes the ioye was not lyche
Of Cresus kyng for al his riche horde
And blessed be they that herden word by word
Of thy speche & blessed the houre and tyme
Of al thy lyf from euyn tyl the pryme

O werful eke and gracious the sight
Of hem that myghten vpon the beholde
For wel they ought to be gladd & light
That weren with the alwey when they wolde
And blessed weren yonge and olde
That were reioysed wyth thy excellence
When that hem ase of thy hygh presence

O the ioye who coude telle a right
Of thyh heuently meditations
Assendyng by above the sterres bright
In thyh Inward contemplacions
Or the blessed & holy visitacions
Who can reherse bright as sonne or letient
So ofte sent down to the frowe heuene

Or who can telle thyh holy stepps soft
With godd alwey ful in thyh memorie
For loue of whom thou sighdest ful ofte
Wher thou wert soole in thyh ouerweye
Or who can telle the meschance or ghyfte
That aungels hath maad in the place
For the ioye they had to see in thyh face

I am wode to reherse alle
For vnkowynge & for lacke of space
The matre is so Inly spiritual
That I dare not so hygh a seyle pace
But lady myn I put me al in thy grace
This first booke comppild for thy sake
Of my synplenesse & thus an ende I make

Besechynge al to haue pyte & wouth
That theow shal haue ony Inspection
If oughte be left of needgengs and southe
Or sayd to moche of presumption
I put hit mekely to hir correction
And aye mercy of my trespass
There as I erre & put me in hir grace

And thorow hir benygne supportacion
So as I can forth I wyl pwyce
With al myn lere & hool entencion
Charynge that mayde of so goodly chere
Crowpe & wote to helpe in this neede
Whom I now leue in nazareth so iorne
And to my matre I wyl agayn retorne

Hold mercy and wee tightheartnes
and trouthe disputeden for the redemption
of mankynde capitule Indecimo

Who that is bounde and fetterid in prison
Thynketh longe after deliuerance
And he that felith payne and passyon
Desireth sore after allegeaunce
And who that is in sorow and penaunce
Extyl wonder of heretly leynesse
Though he coueyte relees of his distresse

And who that lyueth in langour & in wo
Fer in exyle and prescription
And is withsette with many a cruel foo
And can no geve to his sauacion
To escape deith without grete raunson
Ful longe he thynketh of ful lityl space
While he in bondes abydeith after grace

And yet to recorde of olde felicity
In sothfastnes encreasith more his payne
Than al the constraynte of his aduersite
And causith hym more to spghe & playne
For ioye passyd can hertys more constrayne
Her welthe afore to selwepe and wayle
Than al the torment that hem doth assaile

O who coude euer sith the world began
Of more ioye or of gladnoe telle
Than somtyme coude the worthy kynde of man
That shapen was in paradys to dwelle
Tyl he alas was banysht in to helle
Fer in exyle from his possessioun
And there to abyde stockid in prison

And he hath lost his riches and honour
His myrthe hys ioye & his olde wel fare
His force his myght and hooly his socour
And was of vertu naked made and bare
And laye ful seke languysshynge in care
So fer proscrip't out of his contrie
That by the salbe there may no recouer be

Whos necke oppressid with so stronge a chene
Laye plunged down without remedye
That when mercy wold haue ben amene
Rightwysnes gan hit anone denye
And when that wæs for recouer gan to crye
Came trowth forth with a sterne face
And sayd playnly that he gett no grace

For wæs and mercy to gyder assembled were
Ful longe agone to tete of this matere
And rightwysnes with hem was eke there
And trowth also with a depnous chere
And when they were al four in fere
As ye haue herd and gan to enterte
Than first of al cruelly to therte

Trowth began almost in a rage
Of cruel Jee and of malencolye
And said shortly that man for his outrage
Of trespight must nedes dye
And thus began the contrauersye
Betwene the susteryn & trowth althey in one
Sayd playnly that recouer was there none

For I quod trowth at his creation
Tolde hym the pærel afore his offence
But he me put out of his bandon
And gaue to me no maner audience
And I quod right al my dysagence
Wold hym haue rebeld but he took none heed
Wherefore of me he gett none helpe at neede

And whan he gaf credence to the snake
He made his quarrel eyn agynst right
And agayn trowth he falsely gan to take
Whan he hir clene put out of his sight
And agayn pres began a quarrell to fight
Whan he from hym mercy sette asyre
And so he sette hym self al out of herre

Therefore quod right pletith for hym nomore
But let hym haue as he hath deseruyd
Ye do grete wronge yf ye wyl hym restore
That hath his beste to you not consuuyd
A yis quod mercy nature hath wescuyd
To pres my suster playnly and to me
On wretches euer for to haue pyte

And offendyth hath of ignoraunce
More than of malice yllys qd mercy tho
Yet for al that he must haue his penaunce
Quod right anone like as he hath doo
And thynke quod pres that towarde Jerico
He was disposid amonge his cruel foen
For lacke of helpe whan he left hym allone

That was qd trowth for he was reckless
To goo the waye y taught hym of wson
Quod mercy than the mortal foe of pres
The olde serpent wote of al tresoun
Of false enuye and indygnacion
Lay a waye to brynge hym in a trayne
Whan he to hym falsely dyd fayne

That yf he ete of the forbidden tree
The fayr faute in paradyse present
He shold lyke vnto god he
Of good and euyl to haue entendement
And for my suster trowth was absent
And ye your self also rightwysnes
He was betrayed strightly by falsenes

Wherfore quod mercy I purpose to write
Hym to releue yf I can or maye
And I quod pres wyl helpe synners
The grete yre and rancour to assaye
Of iugement to put it in delaye
And here vpon to fynde ful refuge
I wyl procede afore the hye iuge

Holb mercy and pres brought in this place
Before the hygh iuge capitall

en

a And right forthwith before the kyng of glory
Mercy and pres the cause brought anon
And in the hygh heuynly consistory
Pres said thus amonge hem euerychone
O blessed lord that art bothe thre and one
So please hit the benygne to here
What I wyl say and my suster deere

Remember lord amonge thy werkis alle
Holb thou madest mercy soueraygne
That wthan that euer vnto the she calle
Thou maist not of right hir prayer disdain
And specially wthan that be to the elayne
To thy hyghnes for any thyng require
Thou made of graue fulfille our prayere

Is not thy mercy grete aboue the heuyn
Thyn olde daughter deef of thyng alre
And hath her place aboue the sterres seven
With the ordres of euery hierarchy
Whom day by day thou canst so magnifye
Amonge thy werkis to make hir emperesse
To helpe wretched wthan they ben in distresse

Thy mercy eke abydith euer with the
Lyke thy grēnesse & thy magnificence
And who that doeth mercy and pyte
Doth sacrifice hygh in thy presence
And is not mercy of more excellence
Lyke as the fawter wel rethre can
Opon the erthe than the lyf of man

Thy self also as it is playnly couthe
Auyfedy who so takith hede ther to
Sayest openly with thyyn olde mouthe
That to a thousand thou canst thy mercy doo
And holy dauid recordith eke also
With his harpe aboue al thyng
That be thy mercyes eternally shal synge

And holy myght eke ony creature
Opon erthe in ony maner kynde
Without mercy ony whyle endure
For al were goon yf mercy were behynde
Wherfore lord on mercy haue thy mynde
The wooful carys to take vnto thy grace
That hath so long be seuerid fro thy face

And though that I be humble meke & free
Forsothe lord of duete and of right
Yet euer in one my dwellyng is wyth the
For selde or neuer I part out of thy sight
Peas is my name that wolber hath & myght
Thowlt my kunnyng they that be mortal foone
By the helpe of the to accorde in to one

And also hede as holy writte can telle
That of thy pes there may none ende be
And eke thy pes doth euery wyght exalle
And art thy self of very duete
Calld the pryncer of pes and byte
And yet byhoteft wretchis to releue
That is mankynde & shal neuyr fro hem meue

And Iob recedeth the holisomest fruyte
Of al this world; spryngeth out of pines
Now lord; sithin I am maad to be refuged
And to the wooful comfort and entres
Gaunte of thy grace now a ful trees
That I and mercy may the soon confort
Of thyllike captif that lyeth in pryson bounde

So that he may haue libertie
To goo at large and haue remission
Of this thraldom and captiuitie
And be deliuered out of this pryson
So that there may be made redemption
For his seruage and synal paye
Lord; of thy mercy without more delaye

And when they had set mater ful purposid
Mercy and pines with ful hych sentence
Touchyng man with synne so encheid
The iuge gaf benygne audyence
And when he had kept longe salence
For al the skilles to hym that they layde
Yet at the last to hym thus he sayde

11
Holt god; the fader of heuyn answered to
mercy and pines capitulo

Myn olde daughter next to myn alre
Though your request come of tendre lre
Ye must consyder with a prudent eye
Of rightiuousnes it may not me asterce
Lyke your appyng by fauour to aduerce
Onto the cause that ye represent
But right and trouthe fully wolde assente

Withouth whom I may not pced
To execute any manner judgement
Wherefore let calle her in this grete nede
For I mote boorde by hir ayngement
And when they thert come and present
Than trouth anone touchyng this matere
Said oppnly that al myghth her

Yf hit so be this man that trespassyd
He be not dede for his Iniquyte
Though sturly the faunchesse is defaced
Bothe of my suster rightwysnes and me
And synally our bothe lyberte
Goeth into nought of our Jurisdiction
But he be punysshed for his transgression

The word of god that playnly may not erre
Tolde hym afore withouthen any drede
The grete paynle of this mortal warre
Etynge the appyl that he muste be dede
But he of skouth took therto none hede
Wherefore he muste as right lust prouyde
Withouthen mercy the dome of deth abyde

And though that pces be of ppte meuyd
Man to despuer with a zeel of wouth
Rightwysnes wold than be agreuyd
Withme to consente that am calld trouth
And as me semyth it were to grete a skouth
Dome or cause plee or any sute
Withouthen so thayne to be execute

Me semyth eke my suster pces doth wronge
To foster a man & holde agaynst so thayne
That hath ben conuersaunt so longe
Amonge so discorde to reserayne
Wherefore quod pces now byl I not fayne
To doo myn offyce right to modeste
That she of rygour cause hym not to dye

Than quod right of necessity
Hit must follow though he were my brother
That he must dye by some of equyte
Or in his name moche he dote some other
So of my shyppe guyde is the wyse
That ne may erre for walde ner for lye
More than the anker of trouthe lye me hys

Certes quod mercy so it nat dyspense
Unto your noble and lye prouidence
His deth to you may be litle ese
For holy writte testifieth in sentence
Yf you consydre in your aduertence
That deth of synners the hygh god to quene
Is werse of dethis yf ye of right list deme

For synful blood is no sacrefyse
To god above that every thyng may sene
Than must ye the deth of one deuyse
That is of synne innocent and clene
And is I trowe vnder the sonne shene
Throgh the world to reuerce al mankynde
It were ful hardy such one for to fynde

For rust wyth rust may not scouryd be
Ne foule wyth fylth may be purged
But who is so lode wyth dyshoneste
To brasse another it is not alyd
Blacke vnto white may not be dyed
Ne blood infect wyth corruption
To god for synne is none oblacion

Figure herof ye may beholde and see
As th: byble makyth mencion
Hold that a lambe of spotte & fythe fere
Somtyme was take by election
And offryd by in satisfaction
To god for synne for to signefie
Who shold for manns unswaym dye

Must be cleane pure and; innocent
Right as a samle from every spott & blame
And truly Under the firmamente
There was none such sithen adam dyd; atame
The fault to ete for eyther hake or lame
In souerayn vertu is al the kynde of man
Wherfore god mercy the best rede that I can

That pes my sister ase this discord
And al the serf that is vs. byllbene
And that we praye our Juge & myghty lord
To this mater benignely to see
And; of his grace to shape such a mene
For trowth & right so prudently ordeygne
That pes ne I haue no cause to pleyne

And this request is nought agaynst right
Ne into trowth playnly none offence
Yf that our Juge of his grete myght
Ordeyne so in his prouydence
To scape alwey thorow his sapience
That trowth and; right be not displeid;
Therow pes & me though man be holpe & eased;

Holv the fader of heuyn accordyd; the
foure syster capitulo

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a And when that she by reason had fyned;
That groundyd; was playnly vpon skylle
The hygh Juge by mercy is enclyned;
To condescende of grace to hit wyll
And in such wyse hit appoynt to fulfille
That right be seruyd & trowth not dysmayed;
That pes & she shullen eke be wel apayed;

And by sentence anon diffynge
The Iuge sayde for conclusion
In innocent pure and cleane of lye
Shal mekely dye to paye the raunson
For manns gylt and transgressyon
And he so fully shal the deith abyde
In al his payne that he no word shal seye

And thus shal right in al maner thyng
Haue his desyre and trouthe shal not fayle
But agreeably in theyr borespyng
To execute fully to seynt this lath
And for that pce in moche may auayle
And mercy eke shal not be agreuyd
His broder auyng also shal be achreyd

To fynde a man that shal undertake
This myghty quarrel of mercy and pte
To suffre deith onely for manns sake
Uncompellyd freely and of volunty
That is a lambe withouten spotte shal be
And with his blood shal be the vnderfouled
The gylt of man with tye of synne y mouled

Both his sone shold take mankynde captiue

Not for to becke of what stocke he shal spring
Of what kynred and of what estate
My sothfast word eternally luyng
Myn olde sone with me increate
Shal down be sent to be incarnate
And wrappe hym self in the mortal kynde
Of man for loue so that he may fynde

A cleue grounde his palaye Into bylde
In al the erthe neither of tyme ne stone
But in a mayde desonayr and mylde
The humble daughter of juda and syon
And Into hir shal trowe & mercy goon
By one accorde sent afore my face
Eke my deuyse to chuse me a place

And say to hir in al maner thyng
His tabernacle that she make fygge
Aynst the comyng of his myghty kyng
Whiche is my son and myn olde kyng
That in her brest shal haue his repyng
Where trowth & mercy shal to gyde mete
By one assent and her vancour lete

And there shal pees hisse rightwysnes
And al the susteris accorde in that place
And right shal leue al hir stourdynes
And trewthis swerde shal nomore manace
And fynally mercy shal purchace
A chartour of pardon like this mayden cleue
And whiche for man is so good a mene

That he shal molde escape daungers
Amyd the forest free from euery trappe
While the mayde that causeth al this pees
Hath the bypocrite slepyng in her lappe
That thowld mekenes shal his horne so brappe
That it was wont to flee by byolence
Thowld deth it shal ageyn deth be defence

Aynst benygn more holsom than treacle
Euery payson asofte and aswage
Whan the syon maketh his habytacle
Withyn a mayde but of tender age
And gabriel shal goon on message
To hir anone myn olde secretar
With nelbe tydynge & no lenger tarye

Holb gabriel the Aungel was sent to
our lady capitall

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a And right forthwith the aungel cometh nought
But helde his waye from the fe of grette
Unto this mayde cleue in lyffe and thought
Where as she sat in hir owtore
With herte ententf & with houle memorie
Grette to godd and al hir ful mynde
To whom the aungel whan he dyd hir fynde

Bemygnely with al humylyte
Said vnto hir anone as ye shullen see
Wayle ful of grace our lord is wyth the
He drede the not but he right glady of the
That art to godd so acceptable and de
That hooly his grace is vpon the falle
To be most blessed amonge wommen alle

And with that worde thowth goddis myght
Al houl the somme of the deyte
That from heuyn his blyssful beys bright
Shadde on therhe of our humanyte
Whan in the berse of a mayden free
The hooly ghoost by free election
For hir mekenes hath made his mansion

For whan that bernard somtyme gan to holde
With thought vp lift by contemplacion
The bright sone in herte he gan to colde
Jnly astoned in his affection
And ful deuoutly in a meditacion
Therof remembryng as he gan taste he
Said euen thus quakyng in a dre

A lamentacion of saynt bernard capitall 232

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a Lord quod he so I am agryed
And for a dundy to take on this cleynesse
And yet wel more wyth feare I am supprised
For to beholde for myn vnworthynesse
Ong word to wyte or to expresse
Of this mysterie and grete wonder
Benygne lady lest thou saye to me

What arte thou bold or darist in ony wyse
My rightwysnes to telle or to wyte
Or to presume so hardely to deuyse
My testament with thy mouth endyte
That artes lady but yf thou respyte
My wretchednes by supporte of thy grace
I greatly drede of deeth for my trespass

But holdy god thyng his grete myght
And his goodnes lyke to my desyre
That from thaulter that brennyth in his sight
No lital sparcke but a flame of fyre
Wold down diffende myn herte to ensyre
For to consume with his feruent herte
The rusty fythe that in my mouthe doth fyete

And al vncleynesse cankerid there of olde
To make clene and to scoure away
That thowgh his grace I durst be so bolde
Other to wyte or somme worde to saye
That was referaid vpon the blisful day
Whan gabriel and marie mette
In nazareth and humbly hit greette

But sithen this man so passyt of luyng
This holy bernard so good and gracious
So dreadfull was this mater in wytyng
That was of lyf so iuly vertuous
Holt dar I than be presumptuous
I wooful wretch in ony maner wyse
To take on me this passyt hygh emprise

My kyss pollute my mouth with synne & soyled
Myn herte brenne and ful of carelesnesse
My thought also with al thyngs soyled
My herte wepte & chere of wretchednesse
That me to wrete of ony perfitesse
Not onely drede of presumption
But for to eschewe the indignacion

Of god above for my grete offence
That I am holde or hardy in his sight
To dar presume the grete excellence
For to describe of hir that was so bright
But under hope that mercy passeth right
And that disdain me shalle not scape
With humble herte thus to hym I praye

A recapitulation of the wordes of gabriel to
our lady holb holy may by devyne likeness
Wrote of our lady in comendacion of hir as ybis

O Lord whos mercy goth not to decayne
But ever eche stondest hole in one I
That somtyme sendist down from scaphe
To save an aungel with a stone
Wherbyth he began to touch his mouth anon
To purge his kyss from al pollution
So let thy grace to me descende down

My rude tunge to expre and speke
Somwhat to say in comendacion
Of hir that is welke of womankind
And shew hir helpe and meditation
Be to my style ful direction
And let thy grace alwey be present
This booke to further after myn entente

For of my lyp for to undertake
To speke or write in so deuout matere
Etyl wonder though I tremble or quake
And chaunge sothe countenaunce and chere
Sithen this mayden of Vertu therfore
Perturbid / was in like and in dysage
Of gabriel to here the message

And ful demurely styll gan abyde
And in her herte castyng vp and down
Ful pridently vpon euery syde
The maner of thys salutation
And holt hit myght in conclusion
In ony wyse fully performede be
She stondyng hole in hys Virgynyte

And when the aungel salde hir sollyphede
Her humble countenaunce chaunged in her face
He sayde marie for no thyng that you drede
For tofore god thou hast founde grace
And shalt conceiue within a litel space
And in thy wombe a sone of al Vertu
And shalt hym calle when he is borne Ihesu

That shal be grete & namyd sothfastelye
Sone of the hest that euer was of myght
And god to hym shal geue ful Justelye
The see of dauid his olde faders right
And he shal reygne in euery wyghers sight
In the holles of jacob eternally by signe
Whos kyngdom euer shal last & neuer fyne

And though his herte were passyng of renolune
Surmountyng eke as in excellence
That backwardly pas so meruaybus a solune
And wonderfull to her audyence
Eke she ful mekely of grete reuerence
And look down cast of her eyen clere
Comynghen the aungel gan enquire

In what maner shal this thyng be kepte
Sithen I no man knowe in no degree
Quod gabriel within thy blessed spere
The holy ghoost shal I shewlyd be
And al the vertu of the trynity
Enchyle shal in thy brest so cleue
The sonne of lyl wyth al his tempe shen?

Wherefore this childe that shal of the be borne
Shal calyd be goddis sone eterne
Beholde & see a litle betwixt
Elisabeth thyn olde cosyn dere
Conceyued hath sithen goon half yere
Though she for age went to haue been barren
And is with childe to put al in certayn

That to god is no thyng impossible
But as hym list may euery thyng fulfill
Unto whos worde be fully now credyble
Beholde quod she of god the meke auaille
With al myn herte obeyng to his wyll
In euery thyng right as hym list it be
And like thy word faile it vnto me

Lo she that was chosyn for to be
Of al this world lady and emperesse
Of heuyn & erthe alone to be quene
And goddis moder for hir holpnesse
Lo for al this holi soly wyth mekenes
She al complayneth vnto goddis wyll
As he ordyneth wry to fulfille

And wolde not calle her self none othir name
But goddis handmayde in ful softe manere
O where is al the transitorye fame
Where is your luste or daren you aye
Of pompe or pryde or surquedrye in fere
With your forsworne shewyngs vanite
Sithen that a mayde shoulde hir humylyte

Of pryde hath nolt wonne the victorie
And openly hath reuyd hym a falle
Thorow whose holdynes the hygh kyng of glorye
Within her wombe hath made in speciall
His dwelling place & his hospital
And with one worde of the mayde I spoke
The holy ghoost is in her chaste yoke

A comendacion of our lady capitall vij

a And wha thaungel from hir departed was
And she allone in her tabernacle
Right as the sonne perissheth thorow the glasse
Thorow the cristalle lewelle or spectacle
Without harme / right so by myracle
In to her closet the fathers sapience
Entrid is withouten violence

Or ony woman into her maydenshede
On ony syde in party or in alle
For goddis sone takyng our manshede
In hir hath hylde his paleys pryncypalle
And vnder pyght this maner of alle
With seven pylers as made is memorye
And therein sette his reclinatorye

Whiche is perfourmed al of pure golde
Only to be for to signefye
That he al holy maad hath his holde
Within this mayde that calld is marye
And seven pylers that holden this mayde gyre
Seven spirites so as I can differne
Of god aboue this mayde to gouerne

For al the tresour of his sapience
And al the wisdom of heuen and erthe thereto
And al the riches of spiritual science
In hir were hyt and closid eke also
For she is the toure without borders moore
And house of yuore in which Salamon
Shitt al his tresour in his possession

She was the castel of the cristall walke
That neuer man myght yet enclose
In which the kyng that maad and causeth alle
His dwellyng chref by grace gan dispose
And like as delbe descendyth on the rose
With syluer dropps and of the leys fayne
The fresh beaute ne myght not payne

Ne as the rayne in aprille or in maye
Causeth the vertu to renne out of the rote
The grete faynes nought aseynt may
On Hyoletis and on herbes foote
Right so this grace of al our groups boote
The grace of god amyd the hely whete
The beaute causith to be of more deyte

And as the colyle with heuenly delbe so clene
Of kynde engendryth whete perles wunde
And hath no cheryshyng but the sunne sene
To his fosteryng as hit is playnly founde
Right so this mayde of grace most habounde
A perle hath closid within her brestys whete
That from the dethe myght al our munson quyte

She was eke the gate of the lockis bright
Sette in the north of hygh deuotion
Of which somtyme the prophete had a sight
Ezechiel as is writon in his auysyon
Which stood euer clos in conclusion
That neuer man entre shal ne pace
But god hym self to make his dwellyng place

And yet in so he as I ceter can
So as the floure of gordon was bette
Tofore he saught with him of madyan
With heuenly delbe empyon al he sette
In signe onely he spede that the bette
Right so hath god on hir his grace sheldyde
With the holy ghoost when she was bydelbyde

In token playnly she sholdy forour be
Wnto mankynde manly for to fight
Agayn the wyll that hath in his pouste
Al madyan byth his felle myght
And thowth the helpe of this mayden bright
And thowth the delbe of hir heuenly grace
We shal this serpent from our bondes chace

She was also of golde the ryche vne
Keepng the man of our sauacion
That al our woo may to ioye turne
With holfom food and ful perfection
She was also as scripture maketh mencion
The yerde of aaron with fruyt and leups lade
Of vertu most to comfort vs and glade

She was the aulre of ceter golde and stone
Stadfast and twelbe in perfeccion
And as the ceter conseruynge ay in one
His body clene from al coruption
And for to make a ful oblation
Of euery vertu to god in chastyte
She shone as gold by parfyt charyte

And on this aulre she made her sacrefyse
With fyre of huz burnynge as bright
To god and man in euery maner wyse
As don the steris on the frosty nyght
Hir frankensenz paue so clere a light
Thowth good ensaumples that the parfyt leuene
Of hir bypnyng taught in to heuene

She was the trone where that Salamon
For worthynes sette his tral see
With golde and yuore that so bright shone
That al about the beaute men myght see
The golde was loue/ the yuore chastete
And elbeue lyons so grete huge and large
That of this werke were by the charge

Of the olde salbe weren prophetes elbeue
That longe before gan beholde and see
That Salamon goddis sone hym selue
Shold in this mayde beholde his tral see
So that in soth hir clene virgynete
To be a moder shold no thyng lette
Amyd hir breste that he his trone sette

She was the woman that saynt John
Salbe in heuen so richely appere
Cladde in a sunne whiche brighter shone
Than phebus doth in his longe spere
And elbeue sterres that passynge were clere
So as to hym playnly dyd seme
Weren sette aboue in hir dyademe

And as hym thought at hir feet there stood
A large mone bright and no thyng pale
In fygure onely that she that is so good
To sibage the bytter of our olde hale
The sunne of lyf maad to auale
Doun to the erthe to gouerne vs and gyde
And eke the mone to vs doth signefye

Al holy churche large to beholde
Within this mayde had his orygynall
Whan fynally with his rightes olde
The synagoge of Ielbys had a falle
For in this mayde the first fuythful walke
Of holy churche god gan first to hylde
Whan with his sone he made hir gos with child

And to reforme the wardenes vntrewly
Of blynde folkis that coude not perceyue
How that marie myght kynde
A mayde be and a chylde conceyue
That yf hym list reſon to conceyue
They may examplers right y nold fynde
Of this matre accordyng vnto kynde

Authentike conclusions agensſt vnbelleeful
men that ſayden that caſt myght not be borne
of a mayde capitule

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o Blynde man thorow thyſe ynquyte
Why haſt thou loſt thy reſon and thy ſight
That thou of malice liſt not for to ſee
How cryſt Ieſu thorow his grete myght
To his diſcyples helde the waye right
Thorow the pathe y ſhyete by grete deffence
Without backyng or ony violence

Why myght he not of his magnificence
Within a mayde make his manſion
And ſhe yet ſtood in hygh excellenſe
Of maydenſhede from al corrupcion
Ye ſen to blynde in yowre diſceſſyon
That liſt not to ſee alſo how he was
From deſth to lyf in his ſepulchre cloſe

And ſee withal thou mayſt alſo aduerſe
How he ful graciously of his myghty grace
Made petre out of pryſon to ſterre
And where hym lyſt ſet for to pace
And yet the doore were ſhyete of the place
What wonder than though god by myracle
Within a mayde made his habytacle

And being choos and partlyllly thyttle
With al the bondes of clene Virgynyte
For sothfastly hir clenness was not litle
Upon no spde ne yet hir chastyte
But encrepyd and fauour for to see
That goddes sone list to light adoun
Withyn thys mayde to make his mandoun

Eke hildesons tellyth of a tree
In stede of faute herich byrds small
From yere to yere by kynde as may may see
Without medlyng of female or of male
This verily is soth playnly and no tale
Eha wonder not though crise were borne hildene
The chaste sydes of a mayden clene

Eke certeyn byrdes called Butures
Without medlyng concupyn by nature
As bookes sayn withouten ony lees
And of her lyf an hundred yere endure
Than the lord of euery creature
That causeth al no wonder though I say
Though that he were concupyd of a maye

And plunius in bookes naturall
Wryte of a rocke grete and large a lse
That wyl remeue with a spnger small
But yf a man do al his myght thereto
It wyl not stee neyther to ne fro
Right so this mayde that is of vertu moste
With a spnger of the holy ghooste

And with a touch of his myghty grace
Conseruyd hath stedfast god and man
That neuer myght remeue from hir face
Of thyllke auoide that she first began
To be a mayde as ferforth as she can
In herte e wylle as ony rocke stable
That from his grounde is not remeuable

This clente also this wyse plunius
Seyth in tauriche there is an erthe founde
That of nature is so vertuous
That wyse cure every maner bounde
Right so marie was the erthe founde
That godd out choos by election
To be the frute of our redemption

That shold be helthe and also medecyne
To al our woundes whan they ake or smerte
And our greuous & our hurtis fyne
From deth to make us to aserte
With holsum salm: perceyng to the herte
Our festred soris that they shul ake nomore
Ne that she ne were be were al forfore

And fethermore this auctour can eke telle
Within his booke who so seeketh a right
To iupiter sacryd is a welle
That whan it hath queynt his brondes bright
That eke agayn hit reueth them a newe light
Who list assaye soth as he shal fynde
What wonder than though the godd of kynde

Amyd this welle from fylthe of synne colde
Ful of vertu with fyre stremys cleve
His hodyng took & his myghty holde
And thorow his grace sette hit newe aspre
With the holy ghoost that withouten were
Though she were colde from al flesshly hede
She bent in loue hotter than the glee

And in saliso as hym list to wryte
Is a welle that causeth eke of newe
Whan the oye drynke to be whyte
And sodaynly to chaunge her helve
What meruayle than though the welle welve
The welle of helthe and of lyf eterne
The herd of al so as I can differne

Thise stempes shede in to this mayde free
To make hir whighdest as in holynesse
That bothe shold mayde and moder be
And euer in one / kepe hir clenness
Withouten chaunge so that hir whitenesse
Ne fadeth neuer in beaute ne in colour
Of maydenhode to be bothe leef and flour

And who that wold dispute in this matre
I holde hym madde or ekis out of mynde
For yf he haue his eyen hool and cleere
He shal noli see preef ynough by kynde
For he that made bothe leef and kynde
And with a worde this waste wordes wynde
Myght make a mayde for to goo with chylde

And he that made the hygh cristall heuen
The firmament & also euery spere
The goldyn aptre & the seris seuen
Eithen so lusty for to appere
And rede marce with his sterne cleere
Myght he not eke onely for our sake
Within a mayde of man the kynde take

And he that causeth folles in the aptre
In her kynde to lye and multiplye
And fyssh eke with fynnes sild sayre
In depe walbes to gouerne hem and dre
And doth one lyue & another dye
And geuyth besyde her fode vpon the grounde
And in his kynde doth hem to abounde

Sithen he is lord and causeth al thyng
To haue keyngs yf I shal not sayne
And is the prync and the worthy kyng
That al embraceth in his myghty chayne
Why myght he not by polver souerayne
At his free choyse that al may saue and lese
To his moder a clene mayde chese

Who causeth the fruit out of the hardy tree
By which onely that springeth from the roke
To growbe & beget like as may may see
With leys grene & nelbe shshines soode
Is it not that lord that for al our soke
Wold of a mayde as I witer can
enkele be borne without touch of man

For he that doth the tender braunches sprynge
And fressh floures in the grete mede
That weren in wynter/dede & eke droppynge
Of salme wyde & of lusephede
Myght he not make his grayne to growbe & sede
Within her brest that was to the mayde & wyf
Wherof is made the sothfast bredd of lyf

And he that graundy of his grete myght
Without poyntel in the harde stone
And the takis with letters cleer and bright
His ten preceptes & byldynges curichone
The same lord of his polber allone
Hath made this mayde here in erthe solbe
A chylde conceyde and no man to knolbe

And he that made the bush to appere
Al on flame with feely sparcles shene
And when moyses gan to approch nere
And yet no harme cam to the solbes grene
The same lord hath conseruyd clene
His habytacle & his herber swete
In this mayde from al flesshly hete

And he that made the wynde of moyses
Of a serpent to take the liknesse
In the halle amonge al the pyres
Wher pharo the peple dyd oppresse
And in deserte the byble berith / wytnesse
The ryuer made to renne out of the stone
The thurst to staunche of the peple anons

And ouer this for to breyfe
His grete myght sampson the stronge man
As iudicum doth playnly speake
Dranke the water that from the chanel ran
And he that made the floodys of iordan
To turn agayne for loue of iosue
That al his peple cleerly myght see

And holb ihalbes gan a sonde strete
And like an hylle to stonde hygh on lofte
And he that made the asse to speke
To balaam for he wode so softe
Why myght he not by wolber prynced ofte
Sithen he the pyen made in the water houle
Be of a mayde borne for mannyngs loue

And he that made an aungel for to take
Abacuk the prophete by a litell take
And sodaynly brynge hym to the lake
In babilon whiche was so fere
And to visite liggynge in his fere
Danyel amonge the bestys rage
Tyl he to hym brought the potage

The doris shutte of the stronge pryson
For to aswage of hunger al his payne
And in a moment to his mancion
Ful sodaynly restored hym agayn
Why myght he not as wel in certayn
The same lord of a mayde than
Take flessh and blood and bycome man

And he that made the sunne at gabaon
To stonde & shyne vpon the bright sheldes
Of iosue and towarde achalon
The more also as al the hooste behelde
The longe day they fought in the felde
Agaynst the kynges of myghty of amorre
That his peple cleerly myght see

And he that made the Hadelb to reborne
In the orlage of kynge excheque
By ten degrees onely to parfournme
By a stepe made to hym of playe
Why myght he not that at this world shal gye
Of a mayde by the same saylle
Ful he borne at his owne wyll

And he that fedde with fyue souys smale
Fyue thousand in folparye place
Ferre in deserte sittynge in a halle
Thowgh the foyson and plente of his grace
The same lord why myght he not purchace
Within a mayde durynge her maydenhede
Whan that hym list to take his manshede

For as the bee to the lye and hony shede
At the hyue who taketh hede ther to
Right so maye flourynge in maydenhede
Bare in her wombe god and man also
And yet in soth she was to the tibe
I dare afferme one person in fere
A mayde clene and chaste moder de te

And as the seme shynynge from so ferre
Sedith his light as may may wel espye
Withouten harme of hynderynge of the sterre
And so as manna felle down fro the skye
Right so this flour that calld is maye
With wombe habyled in to chaſte
Concupyd hath in her Virgynyte

And as the barnacle in the hardy tree
Of kynde bredith and the byne flour
Causeth the byne flour for to be
Thowgh bachus myght a grapes gouernour
Right so in soth mankyndes sauour
As the barnacle and flour out of the byne
Spronge of maye she beynge Virgynne

And as a thorne Under a stone
Of thethe comyth without engendur
And as the femy of which ther is but one
To assies brent wnelbyth by nature
Right so this lorde that al hath in his care
Our kynde ageyn fro synne to wnelbe
Toke flesch and blood in this mayde trewe

And as the snowe fro jupiter doth falle
Thorow the force of sagittarius bolde
And zepherus doth the floures falle
On whyt blosmys whan she doth bolde
Right so in soth the grace alight a bolde
Of the holy ghoost like a wynd cherishing
Amydde the mayde to make his dwellynge

And to the floure did no durre
But partlyly consueryd hir beaute
From euery storme and fleschly lustynesse
As lyke fresshe of faynes for to see
As by ensamples more than fives or thre
As ye toforne haue herde deuse
Which as me semeth ought ynough suffyse

To al that be groundyd in the fayth
Ageynst falschode to stonde at defence
And yet in such so as Saynt Gergore sayth
Fayth hath no merite wher as euidence
Or manys reson yueth experience
But he that leueth and fyneth no reson
Ne kynde accordyng is worthy more guerdon

But yf that ony be nold in this place
That hath doubte or ambiguyte
Thorow false errour thit doth his herte enbaue
Eithre of malice or of Inquyte
For to accuse the blessed Virgynite
Of marie playnly this is my lone
But yf so be that he amende sone

And age mercy for his grete offence
Of hir that is of mercy grounde and welte
That he of benigneunce haue experience
With Iyppon down depe in lette
And that the clapper of his disuinede lette
May canker soone & mene his falsse tonge
Be downe for euer & neuer eft to be tinge

With hym I am no better in charite
Then ye haue herde at eue and at morowe
For herre my trouthe he gete nomore of me
Saue as much as I take hym to sorowe
What euer he be and leue hym with sorowe
To tantalus his hunger to appease
At felbe wordes passe ouer is an ease

Holb our lady went to saynt Johan
Baptist moder capitule

xxj

f Or what in soth Ippon ony syde
Is perus chare apperpyd of his light
E though eyen talbe may not abyde
For to beholde ayens his tyme bright
Right so playnly though the goundy sight
Of herpykes may not sustene
For to beholde the cleynes of this quene

May in no wyse so help disencore
Hir clew light ne hyr parfyt brightnesse
Whos fayr stermes shynen neuer sear
Withouten eclipse to shyne in clenness
For of this mayde as folkes doon expresse
Whan gabriel to heuen drolbe the most
Se replensshid was of the holy ghoost

Roses up anone and out of nazareth
Toward the mounteyns fast gan hir hie
And there she saluith mekelv elizabeth
Within the holbe of helbe jacarv
And right forthwith when she dyd espye
Of marie the meke salutation
And thowld hir eris when passed was the souy

Within her wombe playnly thus to tale
For veray ioye and spiritual gladness:
The yonge Infant with his lynes small
Reioysed hym the gospel sayth expresse
And she fulfilled in veray sothfastnesse
With the holy ghoost salde gan to crye
And euen thus sayd vnto marie

Blessed art thou amonge wymmen alle
And of thy wombe blessed the fruyte also
And hold to me of happe is noll befall
My lordes moder for to come me to
For veray ioye I note what I may doo
For sothfastly thy gretynge as I here
Within my wombe my litel childe noll here

Reioyseth hym for gladnes as he can
That of al woos myn here it doth reue
And blessed art thou that first this ioye began
The word of god so faythfully to bylene
Noll be right glad & thyn here meue
For al thyngz shal performede be
That ben of god bydestyd vnto the

Mary thenne with a deuoute entente
With booke benygne and ful humble chere
The same hour begynge ay present
Elizabeth hir olde cosyn dere
With a ful meke and humble chere
And al the accorde and soole melodye
Of the holy ghoost sayd in her amonge

Holbe our lady made magnificat capitule xxij

In Jhesus salde ande praye my solde magnificeth
Eternal lord to be one elbo ande the
That al hath made ande every thyng nold grette
Whiche of his myght ande bounteous praye
Of his goodnes ande hych benygnyte
Onely of mercy list to haue plesaur
For to consyder ande graciously to see
To my mekenes ande humble attendaunce

My spryte also with lerte & thought in fere
Reioysid hath with fulsum habundaunce
In god that is myn lerte souerayn entere
Ande al my ioye ande al my sustenaunce
My hole desyre ande al my sustenaunce
Within my thought so depe he is graue
That but in hym wythout variaunce
In al this world I can no gladnes haue

For he from haue goodly hath beholde
Of his handmayde the humylyte
Wherfore in soth al onely for he wolde
Alle kynredys that blessedde calle me
Of the whiche the thanke/o lord be vnto the
With price ande honour of every wyse & tynge
Thowth among of sothfast daye
For this allone he to thy name sunge

For he to me hath do thynges grette
Of hych trowthe ande passenge excellence
His grace made fully me to flete
For he is myghty of his magnyfyce nce

His name holy and moste of reuerence
That lyke I leue hit shal me neuer serue
With al my trewe faythful dyligence
To thanke hym of al my hooly serue

And be his mercy moste passengly famous
For hym to hym & so down to hym
Shal shew his grace be so plentifulous
Perpetually that it shal proude
And specially to them that loue and drede
My owne lorde with herte lyke and mynde
To such his pyte shal euer sprynge & spede
Of our right & neuer be lesynde

He hath his arme enforced & maad stronge
His dotedful myght that men may see & knowe
And proude men they reyne not ful longe
He seruyd hath & maad hem ful folwe
With al his herte down of the wyle hem throlwe
For to abate hir surquedrye and pryde
Or they were ware hir pompe was ouerthrolwe
Ful sodenly and sege he: to be a syde

And myghty tyrantes from her real see
He hath assayd and y put a down
And humble and make for hir humylyte
He hath enhaunced to ful hygh renolue
For he can make attransmutacion
From folwe to hygh as it is seen ful ofte
And when hym list the domynacion
Of worldly pompe to falle ful vnsofte

He hath fulfilled and fosterd in her neede
With the goodes of plentifulous largenesse
Hem that were hungry & indygent in drede
And hem releid of al her wretchednesse
And be the rich hath taught from his richesse
Ful wyld & waste to make vpon the playne
And sodenly plungyd in distresse

At fortye & left hym byge in bayne

For he his chyld chosen of Israhel
Benygnetly hath taken to his gnat
And of his mercy is remembred wel
To wyde onely benygnaunce from his face
And humble pees shal occupie hys place
And pyte shal be seyd in his stalle
And trouthe shal his right so embrace
To sette mercy aboute his werkes alle

As he hath spoken & faithfully bepyght
To our fathers that hath ben here before
To abraham & to his seide of right
That his mercy shal laste evermore
For new his mercy al the world here bore
Unto the which to make man attayne
He hath made mercy our kynde to restore
And of al his werkes to be souerayne

Holb our lady after the byrthe of saynt John
Baptist turned to nazareth capitulo

xxiiij

a And whan this blessed gracious dytre
Was sayd to god deuoutly of marie
I sende after playnly holb that she
Styde in the holys boode of zacharye
The monethes the gospel may not lye
And after that I rede in certayne
To nazareth that she went agayne

And there abode in contemplacion
In her prayers alwey day by day
With many an holy medytacion
To queme her lord in what she can or ma
From whom hir thought went neuer ake
Hit ful mynde ne hir remembraunce
For but in hym she hath no plesaunce

In al this world of no maner thyng
For al her ioye was on hym to thynke
What euer she dyd prayeng or worchynge
No thyng but he myght in her herte synke
For fynally whether she wake or slepe
Amyd hir herte he was alwey present
So fyxe on hym was sette her hool entent

And day by day this holy lyf she lade
This parfyte mayde thowgh hygh deuocion
So feruent loue vnto god she had
There may be made no deuyfyon
For she sequestred hir oppynyon
From al the world & let it playntly goon
So hote to god she gaf hir herte aloon

For euer in loue she stent more and more
Toward god in his hygh seruyse
Was al hir lufe with herte sette so sore
Al erthely thyng she fully doth despyse
And day by day her wombe gan to ryse
Throughe the fulfillyng of the holy ghoost
Therby she like to whom she luyde moste

This mene while joseph ay sojourned
In galylee god was ful innocent
Of al this thyng and why he not returned
Was for that he was so diligent
In carpentrye with al his ful entent
Sundry werkis of meruayllous empyse
By carpentrye to forge and deuyse

For in this craft inpassing excellenc
He had in soth & hyg h discussyon
And was hady most in truenece
Of al the werkmen of that regyon
And for he had in comyng such renolune
Lyke a mayster ther is nomore to seyn
The werkmen al his byddyng dyd obery

And when he had al his werke acheuyd
He is repayrd to nazareth ageyn
But lordy how he was in his herte ameyd
When that marie he hath with chylde y seyn
That sore astonyd he not what he may seyn
So at his herte hit sat so iulwardly
Tyl at th laste he abraied sodaynly

And said alas how hit is faile of nelbe
In myn absencc or what thyng may this be
Synthen this mayde so faithful & so trewe
Is with chylde & god wote not with me
That somtyme had auolbyd chastyte
And to my keepyng eke delpyerd was
What shal I saye of this sodeyn mas

What shal I answer my self to excuse
Onto the bysshop yf he me appose
For eyther must I playnly hir accuse
Or my gyllt with this gyllt enuose
This thyng is opene I may it not enclose
O blessyd god so do me now this grace
Out of my herte this wooful ghoost to trase

For certes lordy & hit were thy wyll
I had leuer sturly to dye
Than thowold my word this mayde for to spelle
As I mote nedc yf I hir beluayn
And on my self yf I the charge laye
For to afferme she hath corrupyd by me
I mote accuse hir how of chastyte

And so my self appeare of Entrust
Sithen I in soth dyd hir neuer knowe
O blessed lord haue on this matter wisse
For strictly my lyf is brought so lowe
To see corne growe where no seed is sowe
And wson also plattly can I none
Holw a mayde with chylde shold gone

And floure forth in hir bryggynge
I neuer salbe ne neuer yet dyd wode
And this I doubt my wson can not see
Holw that marie hath kept her maydenhode
In myn absence & this I double drede
My witte is brought & wote not where to turne
For double cause that I haue nolt to morne

That one is this that my fantasie
May neuer accorde that she dyd offence
And wson playnly agaynward doth denye
And vpon kynde ground dyd his sentence
To proue sothely wythout resistance
That neuer woman in natures sight
Without a man a chylde conceiue myght

And with that word he bese out for to wepe
Lyke as he wold al in teneis dwolue
And for the constreynnt of his syghes depe
Stode on the poynt for to haue fallen doune
His sodayn woo made hym almost swolue
So for distresse this ioseph fer in age
Of inlward thought caught was in a rage

Holw the maydens that weren attendaunt to our
lady comforted Joseph capitall

xxiij

a Old lthan the maydens ltheren ay presente
And euer in one abydyngz on marpe
Andz vnderstood what that ioseph ment
All the attones they began to cry
And said ioseph leue thy fantasie
And thy errour for hit is folie
Withoute any to deme sodaynlye

And certenly with al our herte entere
Of knowlechyng in trauay syker nesse
We wyl recorde euerychone in few
Al oppnyty touchyng her clen nesse
And be vpon be oppnyly luyt nesse
Lyke as we knowe vnto this same day
Throug al this world at ones wyl say nay

For we in soth thowth lesy dyllygence
Haue ben with hir bothe day & nyght
And neuer departyd out of hir presence
But euer in one hadz of hir a syght
And late & early with al our myght
On hir alwayted without wordes moo
And from our sight she dyd neuer goo

And euery houre bothe tye and tyme
Of vs ther is as no deuysion
And al the morow tye tyl the hygh pryme
She neuer stynte of hir deuotion
To be in prayer and in oryson
And eche day by contynuaunce
A certeyn houre she hadz a dayaunce

With holy aungels that with her knelid or stode
And on a tyme thowth goddis purgaur
Of his honde she took hir holy foode
As needful was to hir sustenaunce
And this in soth hath ben hir gouernaunce
And as we cehone of hir can recorde
Wherfore ioseph this lyf doth not accorde

In forthfastnes of thyng openyon
That so myscomprehensyve of this mayden fre
Of fantasye or of fals suspicion
For to accuse hyr byrgyngh
Of whiche thyng the law ensur the
That no wight made sochely to deuyse
But the holy ghoost be thowm for to rylt

And here vpon the recorde can
Of al the tyme thou wert in galyle
She neuer allone was with no man
And what she spake the myght here and see
Wherefore Joseph let thy talys be
And deme not amys in word nor in thought
For al this thyng by goddys honde is wrought

And by his aungels comynge on message
Is this thyng fully brought aboute
Therefore Joseph let thyng yre assuage
And of marie be no thyng in doute
Certes god be I may not lorde oute
My fantasye to assent in any wyse
It shold be lyke as ye nowl deuyse

For by an aungel hit were impossible
Hir to conceyue lyke as ye wytenesse
But yf hit so were that hit be credyble
Some wyght by slepyght takynz the lynes
Of an aungel thorow fraudlent falsenes
Thorow innocen shortly to conclude
By engyne of fraude hir thought to delude

And este agayn for his inbardy payne
He gan to chaunge sothe face and selve
And from his own the salt teiris myne
Lyke as he wold drowne hym self of nethe
So sore he gan in lere for to rewe
For this matter that for his mortal wo
He can no red ne wote what he may do

And in his herte he caste many a waye
To haue sonde refuse with al his ful mynde
And thought althow he wold hir not betraye
For he was rightful playnly as I synde
And thus he gan in sondry thoughtes wynde
As in lutaner for possed? by and? down
Tyl at the last in conclusion

He purposith fully & casteth hym vttely
To goo his waye sothely yf he myght
And thought he wold forsake hir pryncely
And? neuer more to come in hir sight
Tyl an aungel on the same nyght
Sent down from god to Joseph dyd? appere
Whyle that he slepte and? sayd? as ye shul here

How the aungel warned? Joseph
to abyde wyth our lady capitall

xxvj

o Thou Joseph ne drede thou not sleue
Thou the sone of dauid? of lyne by descent
For to take marie to thy wyue
Whiche is a mayde with al her ful entent
With whom is ay the holy ghoost present
Of whom god? as I the telle byforne
In temy soch that shal of hir be borne

And like in soch as writyth Crisostomus
Of this matre that for causis thre
Com to Joseph as he telleth us
The aungel cam and? first he sayd? that he
Sithen he was rightful that in no degre
Of purpose rightful he shold? vnrighfully
Thys holy mayde forsake pryncely

Another cause he wrytheth alle expresse
That his forsakynge myght to hir name
Be dishonour and cause in sothfastnesse
Of vntrewe tynge for to speke hir name
And though in hir ther were no spotte of blame
Suspicion to lorde on euer eyther side
The aungel sayd that Joseph shold abye

The thyrde cause & also most trewe
Was that he with more diligence
Shold hir kepe whan he the soth knewe
That she was cleane without al offence
And wryt playnly that by magnificence
Of the holy ghoost his errour to enchaunce
Conquered hath this mayde ful of grace

And whan Joseph awaked out of his slepe
And in his herte by reuolucion
Can to caste and to take kepe
Agaynst the morowe of his awysion
He caught comforte and consolacion
Of al that euer he was afore dyspaynyd
And to marie agayn he repaynyd

And thankyd god with al his holt herte
That he to hym hath so graciously
In recomforte of his inward smerte
His grete myght declarid openly
And of Marie ful benygne
He awyth mercy of humble affection
That euer to hir he had suspicion

And of his errour & of his trespass
This hore guyde with al humylyte
With wepyng open gan to aye grace
And she anone of womanky pite
His haupnes whan she dyd see
Comfortid hym in al that euer she myght
And she anone in al theyr syght

And al her maydens stondeinge inuiron
Can eny thus for to crye helpe
Certes quod he my deere suspencion
Cam of blyndenes for I none other coude
But nold in soth the myste blacke choud
Of ignoraunce is so claryfyed
That al the trowth to me is bryfedy

Thowth grace of god that myn olde rudenesse
Is nold from me chaady clene alwaye
Haue me excusyd of my derke dulnesse
With al myn herte benygneley I praye
My nyght of errour is tordned in to daye
That I may nold with myn eyen olde
The bryght lamps of tycan wel beholde

That for derkenes I nyse what to doon
Onely for lacke of his lamps bryght
Weten me herafter thowth the chyldey mone
And had within me no clew insight
That this eclyps was causyd al to sone
By her sodayn Interposseione
That was cheef grounde of my suspencion

This is to sayn that myn ethely thought
So was oppresyd derkyd and borne down
That wordely styres that I myght nought
He was nor worthy to haue inspection
Of this derke knowlege by relacion
Tyl the sunne of his grace dyd shyne
My to ytte eclyf syd fully to enlumpne

For he to me hath his aungel sent
Myn ignoraunce fully for to clew
Wherfore of you in al my best entente
O ye maydens that be present here
I praye mercy with al myn herte entere
Of al that euer that he h he spoken e sayd
And solbly I praye you be not euyl apayd

And they echone thankyd god of alle
With herte and lyfke both in word and dede
That he on Joseph hath in speciall
His grace of helpe made for to speede
To wyde alwey al his hoolle dede
Of euery conceit and ymagynynge
To make hym knowe the trowth of this thyng

There thowth in soth the ioye gan tene
Amonge hem al echone of one accorde
The armonye entuned was so trewe
Betwene hem that there was none dyscorde
Not so moche as a litel word
And thus in ioye a whyle I lette hem dwelle
And of the bysshops forth I wyl telle

Holb the bysshop dyd to sompnyon Joseph for
our lady was with chylde capitul xxij

¶ Touchynge this thyng playnly yf I conne
Holb word by word sothely in sentence
Of this thyng the trowth is I conne
And reportid that thowth needynge
Of this Joseph or by violence
Holb that marie goth with chylde grette
Wherefore they haue in a fodeyn herte

Cytid hym afore hym to awe
And he came forth with sobyr countenance
Of whom anone the bysshop gan enquire
Abyathar of hys gouernance
From poynt to poynt with euery circumstance
Touchynge this thyng what it myght amounte
Or how that Joseph wold geue a counte

That marie delonayr and so myght
That somtyme was of such oppynion
In the temple is grete nobl with chylde
Agaynst the auowde of hir profecion
By some engyne of collucion
In prouidence of hir bregynge
Noblethystondyng: Vnto that she

Woulde had of holt affecion
Alle her lyf to kepe in her maydenhede
And was that tyme of such perfeccion
That sothfastly withouten ony drede
Of such another coude I neuer rede
Hir vertues al to reken hem by and by
From day to day that tyme trewly

She neuer stynte for to wyrc or praye
But lyke a myrrour of al holynesse
The wyll of god fully dyd obeye
With al hir herte and al hir besynesse
And with al this fulfilled of mekenesse
She was example to euery maner wyght
That there abode or of hir had a sight

And euery day without wordes moo
SOUNDMELE from the heuen adoun
Goddys aungel came to and fro
Wher as she laye in contemplacion
And at the last of grete affecion
By signes shewyd of goddys volunte
She was of vs assigned vnto the

After the custome playnly of the lalbe
That thou sholdest conserue hir and gouerne
Nobl be wel ware that thou haue not mysforalbe
Hir bndyr thought fro god that is eterne
The trouth of thynges clewly can conserne
Wherfore be ware that thou be not to wyte
In this matyr lest be wyl the quyte

Quod? Joseph than with hedy enclyned? hithe
Spre speke I wyl yf hit your wylle be
Of this thyng I am not aknowe
The sothfast lord? that every thyng may see
My tyste is fully be wyl excuse me
Of rightwysnes & shilde me fro shame
Of al that euer ye put me in blame

For I haue kept hir in the same poynte
Of maydenhede that she was me betake
Of whiche as yet she stonpeth in no dysioynt
I dare offerme & libere hit for hir sake
And for my parte what preef ye lyst to make
I wyl be redy & let hit not be spard
Tyl verily the soth be declaryd?

Than quod? the bysshop al suspencion
To deuoyde and? al ambyguyte
That god? may make demonstrecacion
Of you libeyne hold the trouthe may be
Ye shullen attaste bothe thou and? she
Of thyllike water to speke in wordes felwe
That god? ordeyned? trouthe for to helpe

To exclud playnly every conceyt nelbe
Of tinges large and? every fantasie
As is somtyme shellyd by the helpe
Of them that drinke the drynke of Iehesu
As Numeri doth cleerly speake
Wherfore anone ther is nomore to seye
Make you redy for ye bothe libere

Shullen make a taste whetther it be soure or softe
There is none agaynsay ne excusacion
Tyl the trouthe be ryppd? in the rote
He shullen procede to this conclusion
That god? list make a declatacion
Of al this thyng for fauour or for trouthe
There is no mene but the playne trouthe

For yf godd list that your Innocence
Lyke your desert be oppnly excusyd
Than is your merite of your excellenc
That ye toforn falsely were accusyd
And sithen this ptef may not be refusyd
But that ye must obeye to the kalbe
Come of anone & you not withdraue

Do sette hir forth and bynge hir to presenc
That hath in vertu so excellent a name
In whom was neuer yet founde offence
But vnto this tyme euer flourish in her fame
And standith at large from euery maner blame
Nolb lat hir come & lyke as godd your eldre,
For you disposith taketh your auenture

And she anone was of hir frendys brought
Knolpyng not what al thys myght mene
Deuoyde of drede both in herte and thought
For drede in soth may not doo no tene
To consciaunce that is of synne clene
Ne vengeaunce there no place occupieth
Wher Innocence a solble vngilty geth

For the fyre may no whyle benne
After the bondes be taken alwaye
Ne the ryuer holde his course and renne
The adde springe drye forhely this is no name
Ne vengeaunce playntly make may none assaye
To exalte agaynst Innocence
Ne wyde of synne his myghty byolence

For nothpyng but synne may engendyr shame
For selde or not ben the charys tre
Of hym in soth that is deuoyde of blame
For who so is clene takyth litel hede
To wynde or blenke for ony maner drede
And for the assaute of ony mysty chauce
Right of vertu may no whyle shroude

It may a whyle be dekyd wyth a skye
As is amonge the fayr bright sonne
And wyth the wyndes of malice and enuye
The cleere sterres often wepen donne
But whan trouth sette abroad his tonne
To make the soth oppnly be knowe
The wynde of falsenes may no longer holbe

Holv our ladies frendys mayled and morned
Whan the by Thoppys made so stronge a preef
of hir byrgynge capitall xxxj

¶ Han sithen trouth may no whyle dare
Hornys shynke ne hyde hym in his neste
But like a sonne his light abroad declare
Whan she that was the tempe chosen ceste
Of al cleynesse & therewith al the beste
Of al good holv myght hit letyde
Hir light of vertu to be sette a pye

¶ That hit nyl shyne maugre who sayth nay
Whan her tempe sen oppnly discaid
As golde in fyre fyned by assay
And as the tryed syluer is deputid
And she that was in vertu moste assurid
Where the holy ghoost his dwellyng dyd sette
Holv myght than ony mystes lette

The cleere light of hir purytynesse
Or ony maner preef or proclacion
In ony parte for to make it lesse
For light wyl out it may not be borne down
And so wyl trouth have domynacion
For ony falsenes that men can conspyre
Than she that was so fully sette a pye

Of the holy ghoost ne dar but litel durde
To drynke water whether hit be thykke or cleve
To take a preef of hir maydenhede
For hir harme it shal haue no polber
For to deface her colour or hir cheere
But rather amende more and claryfy
The derke dymmyng of every childe (syr)

And so marie stondynge in the place
And al her frendys about empyron
Where men may see vpon many a face
Of frendely wouthe and compassyon
The salt teeris falle and renne down
For drede and loue they had for to see
So hard assay made on hir age grene

But she alwey constant as a walke
In thought in cheere abasshyd neuer a dele
Ne in hir herte dredyth not at alle
But vpon god trustyth alwey wele
That he of trouthe shal trye out the stele
And by that she spake but wordes felwe
Withouten speche he shal the dede shewe

And whan the water fully was confecte
Lyke the statute and the rytes olde
The bysshop hath the cuppe first direct
Vnto Ioseph and hym the pavel tolde
And manly he gan hit holde
And dranke hit vp & chaunged not his cheere
And seuen tymes about the auter

He went than by custome as he ought
Of face and colour alwey lyke newe
And to make also the bysshop brought
A cuppe of water & she of herte welde
Accepthis the this godely fuff of helde
And or she dranke this holy purgyn mayde
At openly thus to god she sayde

Holb our lady prayd to god to helpe
hir byrgnyng capitall

xxij

O Sothfast lord that hast the knowlechynge
Of every thyng that thou thy myght
And art so trewe and so iust a kyng
To hygh and lowe thou wilt do right
And nothyng may be shrowdyd fro thy sight
Thowlt none engyne ne thy face aftere
But sothfastly knowest every herte

So that no wyght face may ne fayne
Tofore the eye of thy sapience
Nolt let thy grace down fro heven trayne
Cleverly in dede and not by apparence
To helpe in me yf ther be offence
Of ony gylt myn auolr to apperche
To the I praye so thy light to recche

That hit be couthe here al oppnly
To wete in soth whether I in chastyete
Have ledde my lyf as faythfully
Lyke as thou knowest for the loue of the
And yf I haue my byrgnyng
Conceyvd hole this is myn oryson
Make oppnly a demonstracion

And with that word the drynke she dyd taste
And went hir cours about the aultre
And al the peple gan to gasen faste
Yf ony signe dyd in hir appere
Other in colour countenaunce or chere
But al for nought playnly as I tolde
The more on hir they loken and beholde

Ther more she was in hir sight fayre
And lyke as phibus in joly grene maye
Whan she hath chastyd the derk mystry ayre
Shyneth more clew the bright somers daye
Whan thykke vapours ben dryuen clew alwaye
Right so joseph and also marie
So fressh were in every wyghers eye

That to behold they thought hit dyd hem goode
Ther longe day in hir oppnyon
For in her face allwey was the bloode
Without palyng or any dealyng down
And allwey more fayr of inspection
Of which thyng the peple gan meruayle
And for astoned thoughten her wittes fayle

Holt the bysshop and the peple dredde
hem of the assay that was maad to
our lady capitule

xxviiij

a And in partye greatly weren dysmayed
Lest that god on hem wold take vengeance
For they so ferre goddis myght haue assayed
Of errour shynde and feray ignoraunce
And right forthwith of herely repentaunce
They wonnen her byskops with fystys wonder sore
And al attones feken down afore

This holy mayde with humble reuerence
And wolden hir feet haue kyssyd there anone
Aspyng mercy of hir grete offence
And she forgane it hem euerychone
And al the bysshops and the peple gone
Wenynghely to brynge hir alwey
And to hir paleys fully hir conueye

Of whom the noyse to the heuen tynge
With herte and speche is theyr magnifye
The lord above in every lyghtes tynge
For ioye and myghte gan hym glorye
And al the day this in melodye
They ladde forth tyl hit drowe to eue
And godey than of hir they took her leue

And forth they went every man his waye
In the stowe as made is memorye
But marie in al the haste she maye
Entred is in to hir oratorye
As she that hath wonne the victorye
Of al thys that aforne gan muse
Hir maydenhode of malice to accuse

And thorow hir merite hath the mouthis shette
And lipps closyd of dem that liven in wete
And day by day keepyng hir closette
Continue ly lay in hir prayere
Expectant euer lyke as ye shal here
With humble herte and deuoute obeyssaunce
Upon the tyme of hir departyssaunce

The holy ghoost keepyng ay hir guyde
Hir chaumbre she kept her day alwaye
As ye shal here yf ye list to abyde
And god to forne yet or the birdes synge
And or that floure doth the flours sprynge
Tofore the calendys of apylle or of maye
My purpose is playnly yf that I maye

For to proude forth in this dyce
So as I can or make mencion
Of the feste and solemnyte
That our lord is the Incarnacion
Only thurgh helpe and supportacion
Of hir that is so plenteuous benygne
Or that phabus entre in the signe

With this carde of the ariete
Of this fete somwhat shal I lryte
But o alas the rethorikes flete
Of petrike founours that coude so endyte
And talyne with al his wordes whyte
Ful longe agone and ful olde of date
Is dede alas & passed in to fate

A comendacion of chaunces capitule xxxiii

a No eke my master chaunces nolt is graue
The noble rethor poete of brytayne
That worthy was the laboure to haue
Of poetrye and the palme attayne
That made first to dystylle and rayne
The gold welde droppe of specke & eloquence
In to our tunge through his excellence

And fonde the flouris first of rethoryke
Our vice specke onely to enlumpne
That in our tunge was neuer none hym lyke
For as the sonne doth in heuen shyne
In mydday spryng down to us by lyne
In whos presence no sterre may appere
Right so his dyctes withouten ony pere

Euery man yuge with his sight dyspayne
In sothfastnes whi so talyth fete
Wherefore no wonder though myn herke playne
Upon his deith and for sorow blede
For want of hym nolt in my grette neede
That shold alas conuere and dystre
And with his suppoit amende and correcte

The wronge traces of my tye penne
There as I erre and goo not lyne right
But that for he ne may me not kenne
I can nomore but with al my myght
With al myn herte & myn Inward sight
Prayeth for hym that nold lyth in chaste
To god aboue to geue his soyle goodr wste

And as I can forthe I wyl pced
Sithen of his helpe ther may no socour be
And though my penne be quakyng ag for drede
Nether to elpe ne to calpe
Me list not cally for to helpe me
Ne to no muse my poyntel for to gye
But leue al this and say vnto marie

O elere castel and the chaste towre
Of the holy ghoost moder and Virgyn
Be thou my helpe counceyl and socoure
And let the strengys of thy mercy shyne
In to my breste this thyrd booke to fyne
That thorow thy support and benygne grace
Hit to performe I may haue lye and space

Holy Cryst was borne after the makinge
of the world; fyue thousand; an hundred;
four score and; xix yere capitulo xxxv

Whan al was hushid & al was in salence
And in his cours the sonne stary nyght
Was half past & fresshe of apparence
Lucyna shone in beum fayr and bryght
Thy word o lord that is most of myght
Whiche ay abydeh & parteth not fro the
Sente & dissendyth from thy ryal see

Both fodeynly vpon al erthe
Shed his light for our sauacion
As I that sponge or mape day the fette
Yf ye lyst here of humble offercion
Dold in the yere of computacion
Fowrty and elbo of octauyan
Fethermore after the world began

Thye thousand as beds list desyne
And an hundred sothely this is no lees
And therbyghal nynty yere and nyne
Whan al the world in rest was & in pces
Withouten warre and of olympeades
In the hundred nynty yere and thre
And by cownple eke as ye may see

Then augustus by comaundement
Generally withouten excepcion
Gad by his lettris that the president
Of eke prouynce cyte towough or towne
Thorow out the world make discipcion
Of euery hede so that eke man
At a certeyn day in al the haste he can

Upon a payne he founde in the cyte
Wher he was borne without more delaye
Bothe hygh and lybe of what estate he be
After his statute his tribute for to paye
And that no man be hardy to say nay
To quyte hym self of euery circumstaunce
To make in oppyn a reconysaunce

With hand assured and hole professyon
Of the prouynce tofore the president
That he is subget vnto come tolyn
With al his herte and his hole entente
And here vpon that he payed his rent
As the custome and the statute bode
That is to say that he brynge in his honde

A large penn emprynted wth the name
And the ymage of the Emperour
And there vpon he shold anone adorne
Another of helpe and for the more honour
With hand touchyd silver for silver or foure
Whyle he lyueth and neuer for to tride
With herse and body playnly to be tride

To tempre his hyddynge to othe
Withouten gauchynge or rebellion
With al his myght for to lyue and deye
And than anone the dyscription
Of euery kynde in his olde toldne
Was made in haste wher that he was bore
And after that I fynde furthermore

His name was regerid wth hem there
Perpetuelly to be in mynde
And this dyscrypung yf ye list to here
Was made first in spryng as I fynde
By one cyrenus the peple for to gyde
To be to come in subiection
For this cyrenus in that regyon

Was preferid there vnder the emperour
In booke olde as made is mencion
And whyles he was there gouernour
Was first than begonne the dyscription
The yere in soth after the foundation
Of myghtyrome seven hundred & thre
At whiche tyme wth his tyme shene

Was fressh ptebus in his first face
Of capricorn the solwest station
The same yere callyd the yere of grace
The yere of comfote and remysyon
Weyng the thyrtyeth the iudycion
The golden number of the same yere
Epygene accounted in our calender

Holy Joseph & our lady went to bethlem
to pay tribute capitall

xxxvj

I The yere of herte thyrty yere and one
Whan made was the discrypsion
As we haue herd that Joseph must gone
To bethlem for conclusioun
To paye his tribute in his owne towne
As the statute afore doth speake
By cause that he and also marie

Wherof the housholde & the tribe borne
Ea kyng Juda and of the kynrede
Of worthy dauid as I haue sayde tofore
And on her iorney as they gan hem speede
And holy Joseph dyd her brydel lede
And so depnly marie than abynde
And into Joseph euen thus she sayde

Y wys qd she me thynketh that I see
Two folkis grete discordyng
Upon the way apperyng into me
That one tryoung that other compleynyng
To whom Joseph benygne lykyng
Answerd agayn & had hir ryde in pces
And prayd hir also not to be rethles

Ony wordes for to speke in wayne
But holde hir waye and hir iourney right
And vnwaryly afore them in the playne
Apperid an aungel with face sterne & bright
Of whom the beaute paue a plesaunt sight
The place enuyron & a swete odoure
And his clothynge the like lyle floure

Was whyt in soth as snolbe that fallst nether
Whiche gan anone chere ande soke to meue
And therewithal with a chaungyd helpe
Bygan also Joseph to repene
And shortly sad his wordes that he true
And sayd in soth that he was to blame
For to be holde ony wordes to tame

Agens Marie though thy neglygence
To say that she spake ony wordes tene
For that she salbe / was none appaunt
But trow soth as she hath it tene
For treste me wel ande be right certene
Of this folke of which she spake to the
In sothfastnesse like as thou shalt see

Ben the folkis ande the poplis thene
That ben disseuend in ful large space
That one of helbes that wepe shal ande pleyne
With many tere dysplynge in hir face
That whylfully shal refuse his grace
Of froward herte for to be tene
To deuoyde ande playnly to tene

The Synagoge with hir rightes olde
Which in shorte tyme shal dwalle to decayne
Ande hir faces queneche ande lere cold
With sacrid light that beene woude to tene
For tyme is come that they must tene
Ande the waylyng of her decayd chere
Concluse shal e helpe as bright ande clere

This tyme of grace fully to obere
With herte e wyll e with humble chere
For goddis worde that no man may withsaye
Hath lastyd it / goon ful many a tere
To abraham ande also Isaac in tere
Ande to iacob that in her holy seere
Ful lastely who so wyll take hede

What at the p[re]sent shaffed
Through out the world in every date & tyme
And with that boord that Joseph myght see
The aungel sayd aboue the sonne tyme
And he goth forth towarde bethleme
With marie tyl that they to the tberne
In ful hitel spaci gan to attayne

To the bondes of bethlem the cite
Wery and made fondle of his brage
Where they founden of peple such plenty
In the cite of every maner age
That they myght haue no maner herbage
In al the colone neyther house ne halke
Sawe a stable and a litel stalle

That was sequestrid and y sette a spide
Out of al p[re]s the story sayth expresse
Made for bestys therein to abyde
Ful streyte & narrow shadolyd with detynesse
In to the which Joseph gan hym dresse
With marie to rest there al nyght
And as she entrid a newe sodryn light

All the place entwyned onupron
That shone as bright as any somers day
So that this hitel humble mancion
Was fassy and light as p[er]bus is in may
Whic he gan to weye and encure ay
Whele she was there al be that it was nyght
And right anone the sothfast sonne of light

Of al our ioye cast hym to arys
And shede his light to glade al mankynde
For towarde mydnyght shortly to deysle
Whan al was husshe holy writte makith mynde
As sothely as he dyd hym wynde
In the spide of this holy mayde
So esely this newe sonne abraide

When he was borne in to this mortal lyf
Upon the erthe to shede his brightnesse
Withouten helpe of ony mydwyf
Or of his moder trauayls or sekenesse
For she that first concyued in clemesse
It sat right wel that she shold also
Withouten trauayle or ony maner woo

For to goo quyte at hir deliuerance
And specially haue a prerogatyf
In hir chyldyng to fele no penaunce
Sithen she was mayde moder and wyf
Chosen of god for to seynt our styf
Of al wymmen by her self allone
Wherefore hit sat not hir to crye and grone

Lyke to other women that be inly syke
In the tyme of theyr trauelynge
Wherefore sithen she was to none other lyke
No payne felde she the houre of hir chyldyng
And as I fynde at hir deliueryng
There was no wyght but her self allone
For thylke tyme Ioseph was out gone

Holt Ioseph went to seek a mydwyf
to our lady capitulo xxxviij

i A ful grette haste to enquire and seeke
Some mydwyf to helpe in this neede
And in this while with her eyen meke
She chylded hath this fount of maydenode
And home ageyn as Ioseph gan hym speede
And to the place the mydwyues brought
Euen at the dore abysshyd in her thought

Wheden styll astoned of that light
And the brightnesse that shone in the place
Ageyn kynde that tyme of the myght
That they ne myght susteyne in her face
And no wonder for the sonne of grace
Within which cast his light so ferre
Of whom the mone and eche other sterre

Receyuen her light eueryche in her spere
Al by that he lay here in erthe solbe
In a stable with his sacred chere
Sool with his moder that no man dyd knowe
Of whom hir holt she mekely gan to thewe
Godely beholding his fayr yonge face
And knelyng down began to embrace

His tender lymmes in her armes twayne
And wrappyd hym in clothes tenderlye
And took hym vp & sothely gan hym leyne
In her lappe and ful humbly
She behelde his fetures by and by
So fayr shapen in party and in alle
And with her mylke very celestyal

And kuenly spour of hir pappes smale
His tender lymmes she spredde in euery coste
The whyt salme to make hit auale
Yet from the conduyte of the holy ghoost
Upon the thyng that she loupd moste
And gaue hym solike of the pyment softe
That spronge & growe out of the holy rote

Of maydenhede & from the chaste byne
Of al clennes was y tryed oute
Wherwith she made her yonge chyld to dyne
Whom heuen & erthe must obeye and solbe
All be that be with bestes hym aboute
Eage humbly as we haue herde deuyse
And after this his moder dyd aryse

And list hym by sothely in to the stable
Where the asse and the oxe stode
And on hir knees she gan anone to falle
And worshipped hym this best of al good
That geyueth to aungels and to man food
And than this mayde with deuonour clere
With face erecte and hondys eke in fre

A deuout prayer that our lady maad whan
criste was born capitule xxxviii

I O god aboue began thus for to praye
O lord god the with al my ful myght
To whom eke thynges justely must obeye
To the I than as it is sayde and right
That thou so godely list to haue a sight
To my mekenes though I vnworthy be
And not dysdayne of thy benygnyte

To graunte onely of thy hygh goodnesse
Me to encreas in to such excellence
To be a mayden and moder in clenness
To kepe thy sone and thy sappyence
That neuer tlynneth out of thy presence
But in heuen abydeth ay with the
And in erthe mekely now with me

With in a stable of clere most deuonour
Tofore my face my ioye and my comforte
Whiche with the lokyng of his eyen fayre
Is hole my gladnes and fully my disporte
Sothfast plesaunce and my chief resorte
My dere sone and my lord also
To whom with herte and alle that I can doo

I thanke the lord that liggist me before
That thou list chese to haue affection
Of me so mekely in wylle to be borne
And fro thy fader to disceide adoun
Onely for helpe and sauacioun
Of mankynde frely of thy wylle
my blessed chylde that so good & styll

Diggest now here mekely by sufferaunce
Amyd the bestys so faye wpon to see
And hast no wighthe to thy attendaunce
Lyke thyne astate alwaytynge wpon the
Saue that thou hast so godely chosen me
Of thy grace wpon the to abyde
I to serue and thou to be my guyde

As it is right & Joseph with vs twayne
To take his parte what fortune so betyde
Lyke as thou list of grace to ordeyne
And than anone right in the self tyde
Joseph cam ynn & stode hit besyde
And sodenly whan he the chylde doth see
Ful humbly knelyng on his knee

Hold the myddyls durst not entre wyth
Joseph in to the holbe for a grete light
aperteynd wythm capitulo xxviii

W Orthypped hym with al his herte & myght
With al his wylle & al his ful thought
And tellyd marye for feare of the light
The myddyls that he had brought
Astoned were that they durst nought
Entre ynn but kepte hym asette
For cause onely that a nethe sterte

Ascended was upon that mansion
That spreade his light & his temple shene
From east to weste thorow out the region
That al they that dyd it sene
Can fast muse what it myght mene
And in her hertes greatly for to charge
That a sterre so bright so fayr and large

Of nelbe dyd appere in that reem
That neuer none such was sene tofore
Of which sterre prophets in Iherusalem
That tyme were astonyd wonder sore
Sayden playnly withouten ony more
That this sterre dyd signefye
Thylke sterre which in his prophete

Holl salam propheted the sterre that shal bid
Crysps byrthe capitulo

6 Alam the sone of beor as I fynde
Comendith so in al his best wyse
Whan he sayd sothely of the kynde
Of worthy Jacob a sterre shold aryse
And eke also as he doth deuyse
Ful oppnly the byble can you telle
How that a yerd out of Israel

Shal sprynge also to smyte and oppresse
The felle dukes of moab with her myght
And he shal waste in warre sothfastnesse
The chyldren of sette and of kynde right
With the shynnyng of his temple bright
Conquere also to his subieccion
Withouten obstacle and haue possession

Of ydume for his heritage
With many another rich regyon
And of Seyr the rich baronage
Shal to hym bowe / for his renown
So that this stee in conclusion
Whiche in bethleme brightest of sternis alle
The which above the lytel egys stalle

So shene shone at the natyvyte
Of the chyld as ye haue heere me telle
Betrokenyth playnly as ye shul after here
That the lord of heuen erthe and helles
Whiche may of moab the tyrannye felle
Was here by look & helde his hostage
In a stable narow as ony cage

Amonge bestis though he were lord of alle
And al this world may at his wyll gouerne
Whiche in his honde hangyth as a balke
In very soth his myght is so eterne
And al this thyng maye gan contrue
Withyn her self spek and ful choos
And after that she mekely by wos

Holb our lady receyvyd the
mydolpues capitall

xlj

a And to the dore wonder womanly
She went a paas and when she dyd see
The mydolpues ful kempnely
She brought hem in with al humylyte
Sephora and also Salomee
And hem welcometh in ful holbe manere
And when that they this signes salbe in fere

Of the sterre/and the bestes kinde
Tolward the chylde to do hym truene
And gan also by other tokens fele
Of maydenhode that there was none offence
And that she stood hole in that excellen
Of purtyt clenness and virgynyte
And moder to be and flour in chastyte

Withouthe hemme on ony party founde
Of al the preues that they make coude
And whan they salbe her pappis so salounde
With heuenly mylke sent from aboue the cloude
Stephore gan the to crye ful bolde
That a mayde hath a chylde borne
The whiche thyng was not seyn before

In al this world who so list to take hede
For it is soth the right of al nature
Passith playnly & also doth eyde
The wyte of man I do you wel assure
But I see wel thugh the myghty cure
Of goddys honde this thyng is brought aboute
Wherof platly I am no thyng in doubt

But assentyd with herte and hole credence
Hauyng theron none ambyguyte
And the anone for the grete offence
And for wantriste of her felow salome
Oppnly that al men myght see
Weye in that arme dede and colde as stone
With whiche she was hardy for to gone

Holb the honde of Salome
weydyd drye capisul

glij

¶ He childe to faulte of presumption
And his moder without tuerance
Deuoyde of derte or of deuotion
Or any faithful humble aduertence
Don as hit ought of his magnificence
Wherefore anone for hit hygh trespass
At openly in the same place

She pynnysshid was that al myght hit see
And gan for sorow lye and complayne
And sayd lord haue pyte vpon me
And of mercy relie vpon my payne
And of myn offence that thou not dysdayne
Me to thy hyghnes hit be no displeaunce
That I a wretch be of ignorance

Offendyd greatly hath in thy sight
Of moche vnkunynge and indiscrecyon
And sodenly in al thyre syght
Euen amydde of that mancion
An aungel bright sent from heuen down
Dyd appere byddyng hit anone
With deuoute herte that she shold goon

Ful humbly in her beste entente
Unto the chylde for to haue socoure
And touch the hemme of his bestement
Reuerently and with grete honour
For he in soth is the sauour
Of al the world and of al mankynde
And polver hath playnly to vnsaynde

Al tho that playnen and lye in distresse
Whan they to hym mekely wyl calle
And salome deuoutly gan hit dresse
Toward the childe & on her knees falle
And said o lord that polver haste of alle
Let thy mercy on me spede
For to socour me in this grete nede

Me wretched myght punysshed rightfully
And lost for euer saue onely thy grace
For in soth saue onely thy mercy
I haue lost myn arme alas for my trespass
And with that word as she dyd entreat
To touche the cloth that he lay in bounde
Without more this salome hath founde

Remedye and was made hole agayn
Sodenly or she coude it saye
And by she rose and may no longer sayn
But in the streete openly gan crye
Holla the lord that al this world may see
Descondyng is and bycome man
And whyles that she thus in the streete can

Tellyng the byrthe /e of the sterre also
And of hir arme and of hir sodeyn cure
The peple gan faste to dwelbe to
To herken more of this aduenture
For in her speche some gan hem assure
And that her wordes myght be credyble
And specially for to them bysyle

The sterre shone euer aboue the hous
As lyke fyr without motion
So bright so longe so glad so ioyous
That al that had inspection
In herte perspyce and trewe entencion
That they weren reioysyd and made light
And al this thynges felle vpon the myght

On a sonday myn auctour wyll not lye
As ye may fynde yf ye list to rede
The viij kalendis for sothe of Januarye
Whan marie example of maydenhode
Was of age who so wyll take hede
Sixtene yere thys floure of nazareth
At the bysion of saynt Elizabeth

chapeuly receyved he ande ye may see
And in this nyght of moste worthynesse
Of crystes brythe ande natyvyte
As the gospel saith ande truly wytnesse
Whan the shepherdes with grete besynesse
Espeit her watche the longe wynters nyght
Upon her shepe/an aungel with grete light

Holb the aungels apperid to the shepherdis
and tolde the birthe of cryste capitulo xliij

a myd the felde to hem dyd appere
And gaue hem comfort in her grete drede
And bad hem be light ande glady of chere
For I ad be helpe to you in drede
A ioye that doth euery ioye excede
That synnally shal of al dyssease
To al folke comforte be ande ease

And be to hem refugit ande socoure
In al myschaues ande aduersite
For nold this day mankyndes saupour
In bethleme of dauid his cyte
Is borne in soth lyke as ye may see
Goth and beholde that it is falle
And ye shullen fynde in an oyes stalle

Holb that he lyeth in churhis narow bounde
This yonge faunte with chere ful lenygne
The whiche thyng when that ye haue founde
That al is soth let be to you a signe
Ande sodenly with laude e prys condygne
With the aungel the hole chynaltre
Of al heuen by one armonye

For iope hrof gan to say and syng
Glorie and honoure in the heuyns
Be vn to god eternally duryng
And in erthe pes and rest be
To al tho men that of one vng
This hygh feste honoure and magnifye
And be echone of one melodye

O myghty lord be prayse and blesse the
And worshippe eke with humble reuerence
And glorifye thy hygh mayesty
And thankyng geue to thy magnificence
For thy glorie and thy excellency
O thou lord god / o kyng celestyal
O god the fader most myghty founde at alle

And god the sone his chyldre aboue eterne
Crist Iesu borne of this heuynly quene
O god also the chosen lambe so deere
Sone of the fader withouten spotte al clene
That doest alway the worldes synne and tene
Haue mercy on vs of thy hygh goodnesse
Synth thou thy self in purpys holynesse

Allone thou art sothely holy and no moo
And lord allone ouer al thyng
And worshippest and hyghdest eke also
O crist Iesu of heuyn and erthe kyng
With the holy ghoost in glorie trynyng
Al with the fader by eternyte
Thre knyght in one throug purpys vng

Holt the shepserdes founden crist
Wpth our lady capitall

glij

a old lord the aungels with this hully soge
The spech of crist had magnified
With perfect gladnesse that was him amonge
To trust anone/ ager they haue him hved
And the hirdes by one awerde alged
Goe hastily into bethlem gone
Wher they founden when they came anone

Marie and Joseph and the chylde also
Lepd in a stable accordyng euerie dele
As the aungel had sayd him into
And of the sight they looked wonder wele
And in him self gan knowe and fele
That al was soth that they sayd afore
Of the aungel how a chylde was bore

In to this worldy mankynde for to saue
After the recorde of olde prophete
Wherof they ganne so grette a ioye haue
That al atones they gan magnifie
Gods aboue deuoutly and to glorie
Retornyng him deuorde of euery smerte
And marie choos within hir herte

Construyd al that she dyd see
Woode and dede and euery maner thyng
That befelle in this natyure
Ful secretly theron ymagenyng
And prudently hir self gouernyng
Kepte hir sone with al her best cure
Whiche on this day as sayth bynauenture

Like a spouse from his chamber is goon
His chosen chylde though his kynyng
In his church to ioye him of syon
Goe perfect rest & sothfast bynde
And be this day hath shewyd the beaute
Of his face of excellente faynesse
In whos honour this day of hygh gladnesse

Was made the ympe the gospel sayth also
Our alther myrthe and ioye to entee
Gloria in excelsis deo
And in erthe this day a parfyt pre
To man was shewyd withouten ony les
And as saith polle goddis tynge
This day append in our humange

Both godd boold not to borne but of a
mayde moder and byf capitulo

23

a | No ouer this as he eke telle can
God was this day in symilitude
In erthe hououryd in liknesse of man
And he this day his godhede dyd enclude
In our manhode and shortly to conclude
This day also yf I shal not feyne
Besyl also other thynges tibeigne

The wonderfulest and most meruaylous
That euer yet were seen tofore
Wherof no wyght by kynde is appous
First how godd to saue that was forlore
Fowly in erthe lye to be bore
And how a mayde in his Virgynite
Myght also chyldre / and a moder be

The whiche thynges passen and transcende
Reson of man by kyndes liknesse
But fayth aboue must al comprehend
And hit embrace by parfyt stablenesse
And make his grounde vpon the wytnesse
Of prophetes whiche in hit prophete
So longe aforne gan to speke and crye

51

After the coming of this myghty kyng
Our olde woo and trouble to endour
To whom dauid sayd in his writing
O blessed lord helpe to be thy son
And be in folke ones though the gent
Shall be saved be from al myschaunce & doun
And also now in our grete need

Send to be thy comfortable light
Us to enlumpne lagging in darkness
Eke praye with al his inward sight
Up to heuen gan his like to dresse
And said lord of thy grete goodnesse
Out of desert from the hard stone
Unto the daughter dwellyng in syon

Send down thy lambe fulfilled with mekenesse
That lordshipp hath and domynacion
Of al the erthe our dole to redresse
And hold god for our saluacion
This myghty lord far to come a doun
The hygh heuens wold breke on abyene
Us to releue of that we so compleyne

And dauid spake also this lord vnto
In the saluter our sorowes for to fyne
And sayd lord in releas of our woo
In hygh heuens thy mercy make encline
And doun dyscende / & lat thy grace shyne
Upon be wretched in the vale of sorow
And lord do dalbe thy holy glad mowthe

Quod salamon and helpe to be thy light
Of thy mercy & relie on our distresse
And with thy vertues that be so moche of myght
That no man may counte them ne expresse
Fulfille spon & with hygh gladnesse
Thy peples bettes make to relieue
That thy prophets may be founde relieue

For out of the shal provide anone
The myghty kynge and lord of Host
And now this day is comen out of stone
Without fonder of that holy hill
Of which sometime the prophet dargelle
In his booke wrote so longe agoon
To signefie that there shold be borne

At Iherusalem / where as a myghty kynge
Shal come in haste his peple to visite
And he shal bringe woe in his comynge
Of whom the polver shal not be a speck
For hit shal laste as hym left to depart
From see to see and al the erthe spurs
Throughe out the world in lengthe and breds

And thus commaunded to Iherusalem
To be holde in al his best entente
Toward the brightnesse of the sonne come
And wysely wike in to the orient
To see the gladnesse that this day is sent
Down to the erthe now that cryst is born
Of whose comynge so many a day afore

Spake ysaie & sayd in wordes playne
The hygh heuens doo your grace adrewe
And sayd also the skyes shold rayne
Upon erthe her moysture for to helpe
And had the grounde eke in wordes felde
For to oppn and thus this heuynly shoure
For to bringe out alther saupour

And jerome spake eke of this day
And said on bryght god shold make se
A gayne of daupd fayer than flour in maye
Which in fresshnes shal ouer sprynge & spede
And conserue juda out of drede
And eke isreal kepe in synneresse
And he shal make dome and rightwysnesse

V
Upon the treise of hygh ande hille degre
And rightwysnes may shal his name alle
Whan he cometh to sitte in the se
Of kyng dauid in his pall stalle
Ande he also tofore the prestys alle
Bothe of juda ande leuy shal drayfe
With nethe entace to do sacrifice

To god alone for the grete offence
Of the peple ande ignorant
With his offering make recompence
Or that the swerde be whette of vengeance
Euen lyke as made is remembraunce
In malachie in the same wyse
This sonne of luf shal spraynge ande cryse

To al tho that hym loue ande drede
Ande ben expectant with al humyde
On his comyng to such he shal out shede
His light of grace at his natyuite
Wherfore be glad lyke as hit may be
Thou bethleme y callyd effraie
Though thou be lityl namyd in juda

For out of the shal procede anone
The myghty kyng ande lord of israel
Ande now this day is comen out of stene
Withoute hender of that holy alle
Of the which somtyme the prophete danyelle
In his bolle wrote so longe aforne
To signefie that there shold be borne

A chyld in soth without touch of man
Of a mayde after his kyndesse
That lyke a stone was y coue out than
Whan he was borne of this hygh feste
Only to be the cowlde ande the dreste
In tabernacle of the grete ymage
That made man first for to doo outrage

For now in soth comyn is the day
Of prophetes so longe before sayd
For cryst ihesu playnly this is no nay
Is lyke a stone who so hapyth a right
Whiche by his wysdom & his fathers myght
And the vertu of the holy ghoost
Was wryuen out so clene of euery coost

Of that blessyd parfyte holy spelle
That growyth ful of holsom flours fayer
For out of hir that was in berte and wyse
A parfyte mayde humble and despayre
Lyke as the dewe of heuen doth repaire
Upon hermon althey welbe and welbe
Amendynge ay the freschness of hir helbe

Right so thorow vertu lastynge ay in one
Of the holy ghoost / this day of maye
Was wryuen out the sothfast angle stou
Whom that prophetes prayse and magnefy
For she this day was the glad styre
Whiche the chyldre of elye dyd see
So playntly descende from the tre

Upon the erthe nakyd and barayne
Of holsom faute / and of erbes sote
That hath shadde the comfortable rayne
The grayne of grace for our alther sote
That perceyd hath euen to the wote
Of our welfare / to do the lynes sowne
For she allone is the felde flourynge

That somtyme gaue so passynge a sickeness
To isaak when he was falle in age
Of which he cast so iulward gladnesse
That hym thought hoke his comynge
Renelbyd was and wyth a glady bysage
Unto jacob of hertly ioye sayde
On his clothys as he his hondes layde

Both ysaac prophesied the birth of crist
by toldehyng of the chylde of his sone
Jacob capitule

xlviij

in yn olde chylde and my sone de
The grete swete nesse of the fresshe odour
Of the clothyng to me is so rare
That hit fro me deuopeth al langoure
Seyng tofore that there shold a floure
Out of the felde sprynge of his kynde
The whiche shold suke an odour shere

That al the world shal comfort fynde & hele
In the swete nes agaynst the maladye
And souerayn helthe in euery myschere
So that this was no wyght but marie
That by dyssent cam of his alre
Out of the whiche to glade al our chere
This day in erthe there dody a floure appere

The swetest yet that euer man helde
passyng the rose and the floure deysse
And of this holy fresshe faye feld
Sometyme the spouse spake in canties
Whan he it salbe so fresshe at his deysse
And habundaunt of a temple eyre
And that it was so passyng July faye

Both the garnet appyl is opened
to our lady capitule

xlviij

o Both the balme of bitterlye lycoure
Of thy sweetnes with souerayn suffraunce
Lyke paradise sheddeth his sapoure
Erlp a morowe auoydng al greuaunce
Lyke the frute that is of such pleasaunce
The garnet appyl of colour golden helmed
Therowt whos odoure the corage is reuelled

Of euery wyght that may the eyte receyue
For euen lyke as the golden rynde
Is playne & shynng as y may conceyue
His colour keepng euer in one by kynde
And doth his pyppnes in the scales bynde
To do comforte to seke in her accesse
Right so marie our sekeneis to redresse

This day hath borne the hollosom holy frute
The frute of lyf that with his sweete breeth
Is remedye and also cheef refute
To mankynde agayn the feuer of deeth
For as the grayne of the garnet sleeth
The stronge ayes and doth the herte auale
Right so this day out of the golden scale

The hollosom pyppne and the grayne of lyf
Cryst Ihesu gan first to appere
And of maye moder mayde and wyf
The goldyn garnet with his scales clere
Beyng al hole and euer a like entere
Was borne in forth for to refresshe the pue
Our olde ayes/and right as the olyue

This oyle sheddith and braunches leef ne tree
Nether not of faynes ne colours
Right so maye flouryng in chastete
This day hath borne our alther saupour
The oyle of pes to stynt our langour
To softte our soris and our swellyngs stalle
Of al our woundes whan they smerte or alle

And now this day sheweth for to lye
This blissful time of the natyve
Of ponge Joseph the wise virgin
Wrought by the power of al the trynity
Within the chaste of chosen chastite
Performyd was and by none hande of man
As alexander wel wote can

Within his booke made in speciall
On cantica as ye may well and see
The which cloth of purpyle most rare
Helpyd by the cleynesse of Virgynite
This day hath shewyd in our humanity
The godlyde hool for by this cloth is ment
Of our kynde the fresshe garnement

Both Joseph figurid the byrthe
of crist capitulo pl. vii

a Also this day of Joseph the canel
Amoyd the feld that doth the vertu floure
Was gaderyd by the cleynesse every dele
Whom al that other gan worshipp and honour
For in chastite cleane chosen follow
Of maydenhede this canel grete by kynde
That when the bretheren of Joseph dyd kynde

Euerich his sike the byble gan deuyse
Both hit stode by amonge hym euerichone
And al the other gan attunes ryse
And worshippyd hit mekely one and one
For this Joseph salve this day allone
Donne and more and stertis eke cleue
To hym obeye upon the hygh truen

And the sothfast garner of the holy gypne
As sayth gypdo was a mayde sweete
In whom was shyfte sothely for to seyne
The sacrid store and eke the husbndys weite
Of the seuen yere that dyde in plente staie
For on this passyt wote vertuous
The seilen eeries of guayne so plenteuous

This day he growen to ful perfection
To saue egypte in his grette neede
And for to be to hym sauacion
In crafte whan he hath neede
For this is the gypne that fostre and fede
With ful repaste woman chylde and man
And al his brethern dwellyng in canaan

His yonge Joseph this Joseph the second
Shal by his wyfte helpe and rescue
And Jacob made in plente to abounde
With fulsum fode at morow and eke at eue
That the hunger on no syde ne greue
Of the seuenth yere vnto his signage
And like as Joseph in his tender age

Thought he shalve hygh by in seuen
Sonne and mone in his aupsion
And therewithal sterres eke elleuen
Honoure hym with grette deuotion
Of this Joseph exallyng of renolbne
This nelde Joseph eise Jesu hym selue
Of the sterres and the signes elbelue

Honolbrid was with holbe subieccion
Though he laye holbe in an oyes stalle
For sothe troni and domynacion
And hole the courte about celestyal
This hygh feste for a memorial
The laudis songe in the seuen quere
Lyke as dauid ludy in the saulere

Charyeth the lord of the high empyre
And with one voyse his byrthe gloufyeth
That hath with loue bent and set a fyre
Seraphym wherefore hym magnifyeth
Welbome also bestis/ though he in erthe lyeth
Ful humbly though his humphre
And noli this fise of the natyure

The hygh aungels and vertues alle
Charyen hym as they ben bounde to done
And let the swetnes of theyr notes alle
Down to the erthe where goddis olone sone
This day hath chose with vs for to bone
And lyeth noli wrapped in his moders arme
Whom wel softly with her holy arme

And with the faynes of his syngres lycht
Ful softly she doth hym embrace
And in so moche in lere doth delecte
His tender symnes to welde and compaie
And to beholde the goodlyest face
That euer was forgyd by nature
For hit was he / I dar wel you assure

Whom she besteth with her eyen meke
That from eterne was in his faders thought
And one with hym who can take here
His olone word that al maner of naught
Whom a mayde hath to mankynde brought
Thorow hir makence of heuen & erthe quene
The kynpal stocke of juda to sustene

Whom that Jacob on his fatal day
Whan antypos shold his therde synnynne
Whiche chode had put longe in delay
And lachesis or they wold it fynde
San to blesse & thus to ben deupne
Whan al his boothern stood enuyron
This olde gray with a ful soft solon

O Iuda Iuda thy brethren enen
Shal prayse and worshyp the grete anoth
Of thyne estate whiche shalt of al thy foen
The pryde oppresse and make hem lorde doun
That shal be clepyd the whete of the Lyon
The ryal beste whiche mangryd ho sayth nay
Shal myghty be to catche and take his praye

And probably here hit home vnto his cause
My sone Iuda in thy dredeful tene
For though thy myght thou shalt victory haue
Maugre echone that the reuers mene
For who shal molbe withstande or sustene
Thy kyngly polver to make resistence
Ageyn thy manhode and thy magnyficence

That shal in the so clevely shewe and thynne
Without charynge of ony maner chylde
The septer of whom / in soth shal neuer fyne
To be famous by reporte of lalbe wolde
Ne neuer cese / ne in couert shroude
Eyl a duc arysse of thy kyntre
Whom al the world shall obeye and drede

The whiche in soth is for to be sent
Out of thy seede by successyon
Lyke a kyng to holde his parlement
With his legges and his regyon
And he shal be to euery nacion
Sothfast abydyng & socour in her nede
And he shal bynde his myghty sterne seede

Of very force at the holsom Wyne
And he his asse vnder the gumpys rede
And he his seyle / that like to godd doth thynne
And his palke by myght of his manhode
Shal weste in gumpys that shullen be
The redde blode deeper than scarlet helbe
And thus arrayed in his bester netbe

Of like be that be sterner to behold
Than the steepe of the high steat
And of egey fayer many fold
Than bynt fynyde thynnyng thagh a beate
Ande like guore that comyth fro so fere
His erthe that be eun smothe ande whyte
Ande like in soth as Joseph list endyte

The sone of Jacob in his testament
Wherto his chyldren / he makyth mencion
Tofore his deith with ful deuoute entente
His presence as they knelgh down
To hem rehercyng the grete aupsion
Whiche he had in egypt goon ful pore
In the forste amonge the holtes hore

Holv that be salbe swelue hertes whyte
Ful lustely goo in her pasture
Ande after that as lyncolne lyst to byrte
He salbe of Juda borne a creature
Of thought e dede a teray mayde pure
And in his dreame he thought he dyd sene
Of hir brought forth / without spotte al clene

A lambe most faye to his inspection
That euer be salbe / vnto his plesaunce
On whos lyft honde stood a fierce lyon
And bestys al by one alpaunce
That were in erthe thagh cruel resemblaunce
Aforcyng hem by sheltoun in batayle
By felle malice this faye lambe to assaile

But or they auayle myght in fight
The lambys wolber made hem for to deye
Ande hem lanchysse thagh his humble myght
That man e aungel within they this conquest seye
They fallen down ande the lambe dyd obey
Sent of god this meke vertuous
Whiche was borne to be our sauyour

Unto mankynde and protection
To slee the Lyon that he may not endure
And accordynge with his auspicion
This lambe of god clad in our armure
This day was borne of a mayde pure
And lord of al here in a fetter cage
By kyn descendyd out of lignage

Of the worthy and myghty Bertheam elbo
And as burion out of a stocke growyng
Right so thys chylde from leuy / and also
Fro myghty Juda greibe out succedynge
Borne of the blood to be preest and kynge
So entremedyd by successyon
Of bothe thys elbo was the generacion

Tyl the braunches be wonne and so fette gone
By lynyal cours descendynge as a stepte
Tyl the kynredes were bothe growen in to one
In to a braunch to haue her repyre
That was preynd playnly to ben eyre
The right of leuy in preesthode to succede
And by Just tytle who so list take hede

For to be kynge and here the dyademe
After his fader and be successoure
To worthy Juda of Israel to queme
To be hir pryncer and myghty gouernoure
And fro Jacob this burion and this sboure
Fyrst gan spryngs / to Jesse tyl hit caught
And so forth down tyl the budde caught

Holv nature obeyeth to Virgynyete ca elig

1 He holy syster is a pure Virgynne
To her faith that shal mankynde save
And now this day the prophete is fyne
In fleshlye birth a kyng came
Bynde and mayde such theryn halle
For this mater hold no creature
To manns myght justely by nature

That ben contrary have her resting place
For mayde and moder shoulde for to sepe
In one persone to gyde may not tace
For by kynde that one must loyde alwey
But in this case nature dyd obeye
To a mayde and gaue by hole her right
Wysely aduertynge / she was to feeble of myght

In this mater to holde chaumpayne
With hit that was of fauour most knyghte
Wherfore she loyde al tancowt and enuye
And humbly hit quarel doth asigne
For hit were sayne for nature to malygne
Though she of kynde be the emperesse
Agayn hit lord that made hit so mayestresse

That she more nede of necessity
In euery thyng to his wyll obeye
And be mynyster vnto his voluntee
Sphe of her myght / he ferth hym self the key
For in to hit by no maner weye
It is no wronge ne no pryncypal
Though of a mayde without synne or spee

That was so holy and pure founde at alle
He holdy grace despayn down so folwe
To take the chylde furel and mdestalle
Of our kynde to make a burien growthe
That neuer was of man sette ne solde
But with a word and the consentynge
Of a mayde a gawse surgenynge

Of judas stocke this day gan ayme
Whan crist was bore of a mayde pure
And the fader sent his sone dene
Down to the erthe to make an Empe
By purgyn loue and fervent chaunce
Eternally be bonde that may not fayne
Fully assurid by weddyng & spousaile

Wellbene his sone his chosyn eyer
And holy church perpetually to laste
And in a chaumbre by excellençe fayer
Of maydenhede that hym self caste
The holy knotte and the bonde so faste
Y bounden was that it may neuer unloose
And of that away for to twayne

Where the feste and the weddyng was
In al the erthe y hallowed and y hold
In a closette more clere than verre or glas
Or any herelle brighte to beholde
For by recorde of patriarches olde
The chaste chaumbre was within adorned
With golde of fayth faye bright y borneyd

With charite that penyth so clere a light
To recomforte al that ben in presençe
And with siluer depurid out so bright
Thorough hygh wysdom of ghoselly sapençe
And al the gemmes that haue excellençe
In moral vertu for to shewe & shyne
The closette chosen so clerely enlumyne

That of unclennesse there may no chysynge be
So fullsum light is there of purgynesse
For there the violetes men may beholde & see
Of clene entent and of holynesse
With roses scerlyd in god to haue swetnesse
And with lylies of chastite y meynt
And therof colour that neuer wyll be feynt

Thiſt dyed the ſcholar martyr
In a purpyle in ſigne of victory
And in this chamber ful of ſonnet darts
The choſe choſe the choſe martyr
This day in ſon the hyygh day of glory
To ſhelbe his myght ſhall be for man gan durt
Y ſpoldſon hath our moſt holy church

And like a ſpouſe he proceedyd is
Out of his chamber for to trecthe
At that was dwynge on in our kynde amys
Wherfor this feſte for to glorye
ful lunge agoon to ſynge his psalmodye
The kyng daupd entune did his harp
And with the tenours & the trebleys ſharpe

He to ſtruen gan enhaunce and trefe
This day of dayes moſt worthy & famous
And at prophecie in her ſalves trefe
This noble feſte / this feſte gracious
And ſwo ſtruen with ſoye melodye
Aungeles ful ſolbeſſone down alpyght
For to honour this holy myght

The myght of myghtes hyyghlyſt of echone
Exaltynge alle as in worthyneſſe
For in this world was creature none
In ſtruen ne erthe ne in ſothfaſtneſſe
On kende ne ſee that with grace beſynneſſe
Her deuoyt dpyd this myght to honour
Dym that was borne mankynde to ſocoure

Hell the churſ temple of come ſpl the myght
of cryſte ſpyte and ether wonderfull
holenys capite

As on this nyght by every creature
Was sothely shewyd his natyure
In bethlehem hold of a mayde pure
A chyld was borne moste souerayn of degre
And first of alle in wome the chyld
His spryde was shewyd highly by myracle
For walke and rof solaris and pynacle

Of the temple moste famous in the towne
To god of yee that was consecrate
On same nyght to grounde full doloure
Playne with the erthe waste and dyssolate
In which temple moste ryal of estate
The statue stood of myghty romulus
And at the byldyng the stowe tellyth thus

Of this temple they of wome went
To apollo wyth humble sacrificy
To haue answer in her best entent
Holt long this fane ryal of aspye
So stronge bylt and in so trusty wyse
That it shold last euer and endure
Agayn the assente of ony creature

Or pardurbyng on ony maner syde
And he gaue answer vnto one and alle
Holt this temple with his wallys wyde
With his creys and battayng ryalle
Shal euer stonde sure wythouten falle
Vnto the tyme that a mayde chyld
And they anone that first made it byld

Of this answer glady & ful credyble
That this temple euer shold stonde
For hem thought it was impossyble
A mayde euer eyther on see or londe
To haue a chyld and so they vnderstonde
And they anone gaue the temple a name
Whiche assent for the grete fame

And called it as I can devise
The temple of pure love his halles wyse
And therewith named in etern
And at the tyme so they dyd dwelle
But on the nyght the house do ender
When crist was borne of a mayde chere
This temple fel down endange the grene

To fulfille the felle prophete
Of apollo that tolde hem al this thyng
And in that place / in the wyche of maye
And of hir sone of heven and erthe kyng
Standeth a church full ryall of byldyng
And euen lyke the self same tyme
The grete statue long or hit were pyne

Of cornelius that was deffred
Fel to the erthe and huss on preys smale
And though romayns made hym stellered
His grete hedy for al that dyd make
Of whom al the werldmen made a tale
That forged it many a day afore
And in soth tyl a chyld was bore

Of a mayde hit shold stonde by right
This grete ymage and neuer his hedy encline
But he abowrd upon the same nyght
When crist was bore of a pure virgyn
Lyke as the werldmen dyd afore tyme
Agayn the concept and the entencion
Of that he ment in his oppnyon

I fynde also that the sters donne
Which of custome curyng so the nyght
The same tyme with a sodayn sonne
Enchaard were that he was at sight
As at mydday when phylus is most bricht
To shewe forth that the sonne of lyl
Was borne that nyght to seyn at our stref

Both the nyght of cressys bygh a welke
in Rome manne oyle capite

lj

a Myr euen than as booke also telle
In bray soth withouten ony lere
The self tyme in Rome was a welke
Of his stampe passyngey entere
To lute vpon as ony crystal cleer
From his tapyns as hit dpyd tople
Of which the water chaunged in to oyle

The same nyght/and to lybre manne
So large plente that al myght hit see
Of which welke longe before or thanne
Al oppnly in Rome the cyte
Syghle the wyse that had soueraynte
Of prosperite plainly lute and tole
That the water of this welke sholde

The same nyght chaunge his lycoure
In to oyle/and so a day endure
Whan of this world was borne the saupour
In bethelam of a mayden pure
And as I fynde also in scripture
The same day hygh in the firmamente
Toward the partye of the orient

Were seen thre sonnes lustely appere
Eueryche of hem large wolnde and bryght
That cast abrode his fayr beyns cleer
Through al the world in euery mannys sight
The which sonnes drewe lyne right
Her cours holdyng in haste and that anon
Tyl they thre were ioyned in to one

9-11

To manifeste playnly to declare
That he was borne in London these foure hundred yeres
To encrease our ioye and our wealth
Fleish and soules and also the body
Emptie al in one by folowest Emptie
Which as a sunne by day sheweth and shadeth
Was born this day of the world to gladd

Held the senatus of Rome bold
Hauing holden octavian her emperor
as for her godd capitol

lij

a lso in Rome as Iulius Innocent
In his cronicle making mention
Held the senatus al by one assent
In consistory of affection
Which they had in her oppugon
Unto her noble and myghty emperor
Octavian of worthynes the flour

Wolven echone hym haue depfynd
And callid hym by name Immortalle
The which thyng when he had espyed
As he that was ful prouident founde at alle
To his presence made anone to calle
Sympke that was myghty of sapience
Here vpon to here her sentence

And therewithal that she most dyspne
Without doubt or ambiguite
As ferre in soth as verbus toth now thyng
Yf there were any of politer more than he
Or perigall vnto his degree
From este to weste lye in ethe lobe
In al this world that she coude of knowe

And this thus doon vpon the self day
Whan cryst was borne in bethlem by myracle
And the ful wyse wote wyl hym in delays
To geue answer making a smalle obstacle
Tyl at the last the fere of hir oerle
Amoyd the chamber of the emperour
Standynge empyron / many a senaour

Was playnly thus wyth clere ande face shode
O emperour lyft vp anone thyne eye
And loke vp vnder / e see the sercle of golde
About the sonne which ethe is to carye
And there beholde thou mayst hit not deye
A mayde sitte of beaulte most souerayne
Holdynge a chylde in her armes twayne

And yet anone as octavian
Salve the chylde by clere inspiration
With out abode / a tope he herd than
From abode vnto the chamber doun
Beholde ande see with humble affection
This is the aulter of the hygh frum
Sette in the sonne clere as ony leuch

Wherfore spakke all abroad gan seye
To hym anone / e lyft not for to hyde
The crowne auaile / ande the chylde oseye
Whos face the sonne bright may not hyde
Ande let now be al thy pompe and pryde
Ande at one word the platly gan hym telle
The chylde myght his polver dyde egalle

Which thyng whan he gan playnly vnderstande
Of faythful wyll ande hole herte entere
He knelyd doun e lye no lengre stande
Ande with enchaunt cast in the senaure
He dyd worshyp vnto the aulter
Ande to the chylde most excellent of fame
Ande lye nomore shure on hym the name

To be calld; agene at skyle & night
Wangfully a god; fith there is but one
And night anone this noble world; hangge
Throug out the world his purp; mote to gone
To prouyners and conuyners eueryone
Upon payne of death that none of him alle
We hardy more/ a god; hym for to alle

For he luel lyghe by signes openly
And euidentis eke in specialle
There was one borne of polber more worth
Than was hym self/ and; thereto immortalle
To whom no thyng in erthe is pryncalle
Of al this world of hygh ne lowe estate
And; for this skyle after dedgane

Was that chaumbre by hygh deuotion
To marie playnly this is no more
And calld; eke for this auyfion
Am all / yet vnto this day
The name abyde / and; styde not alway
He lefth not the light of his brightnesse
Thowld none eclipsynge of forgetfulnesse

And; in edgady the lusty large bynes
That tyme of yere of her kynde lare
San fustiffe & floure / & in seede of bynes
With rich halme her braynes to a payre
And; the vertu that wynter made lare
Thowld constraynyng of colde in the wete
Nature made with fressh blossomes sote

To assende Eyon the same nyght
Down the crowe with faite and; leues nethe
Makynge the bollys as lusty to the sight
As fressh & as fayre of colour and; of helpe
And as plentuous her colour to welle
As in septemb; when suchus hath polbere
To shewe his myght that tyme of the yere

Es hold the kyng & the myghty kyng
That hath lordshyp ouer graue and byne
Vnto whome myght every maner thyng
Heuyn and erthe must enclayne
Can braunches bare / with fressh foliours fyne
Awaie neide / though they be ster and olde
In frosty wynde & in wynter colde

As in somer when pikeus is abste
When flora regneth in maye / & in aprelle
And make blossomes to be as smothe & softe
Amyd decembre when men for colde of chylde
Wherfore this feste fele at his wyll
Eke myght I mene of his natyvyte
To shewe his myght in erthe flour & tre

He made the bynes as ye haue herde me seyn
In edgadyr her saluame for to shede
When they were most nakyd and lamen
And out of seson who so can take heu
Of which myght longe aforne I wote
That in egypt the prophete Jeromye
Ful openly in his prophete

To the prestes of that kyngdom tolde
That the doles of her temples alle
Withouthen ony wite by myracle sholde
Bryke her neckys and to grounde falle
When a mayde in an oyes stalle
Hath borne a chylde this thyng that letyde
Wherfore the prestes in her fynes wyde

Of trewe fayth & of hygh credence
Secretly vpon a litel stage
Vpon his word with humble reuerence
Of a mayde let make an ymage
And in her arme a chylde of tender age
Doynge thereto in her paynym wyse
Afar her wote a maner of sacrifice

And on this wise / as for you & you
They were alwayes when that it was
Tyl on a day of happy chance came here
The noble worthy and wise Colene
The which thinge when that he dyde see
None of him the cause he gan enquire
Why & wherefore the ymage was set there

And they echone of one entencion
Gave answer / & left not for to lye
It was ordeyned of olde tradycion
Scholp'd to some though holy prophete
In which they dyde faithfully espye
Wond'rfull the wise shal not lye
Of the prophete / a wyse though hit lye

And sothfastly in conclusion
Upon the tyme of the natyvyte
The false ydolis in egypt felle down
And al to braste / in pyres moo than thre
To shewe trulhe that yorne was he
Of trum and erthe that hath the regallte
And shal destroye all false malmetre

Hell comyns when they had domynacion
Over alle the world / made to them an ymage
and call'd hit there god capite

3. Fynde also as writeth carnolence
In his book of contemplacion
That when comyns haden exallence
Of hegh lordshippes so many a day a gone
And the poples / and manyes everichone
Stoden vnder him vnder his servage
From yere to yere payng a trewage

Of a tribute that was customably
To the emperre of Rome deliuer
For with the romayns & senates honorable
Whan they folowde in most set order
Draped haue for a space
Ampd her colone in most worthy place
A large statue fempayne of face

That made was of coppe and of brasse
Large and longe & wonderful to see
And of entayls occupied the compas
This grete ymage called shold be
Goddesse of Rome and like a moneste
In hir right hand shold also holde
A large world ful sterne to beholde

Whiche shold of colondenes haue the figure
To signefie that she most glorious
The cyte hath hooly in her cur
And hooly by hir they were victorious
And here vpon most excellent famous
They dyd a werkman sette vp and down
And to performe though out al the colone

And at the laste of happye such one they fende
That passed all to werke in entayls
And was subtyl to the of wyte and mynde
To werke in metall & sayd he wold not fayle
Of this empyre that may so moche auayle
To the cyte and shortly in this was
Though his engyne hit performed was

So raly/ in the world no man
Coude amende hit in that plike tyde
And to beholde hit many a thousand wy
So glady of hit they were on euery syde
Tyl at the last one of Rome pryde
Presumptyously gan to cipe and calle
And said shortly the legges were to smalle

So geate a werke linge to fastene
For lacke onely of good proportion
Wherfore anone with fydynge yte ande lene
The werkman burnt in his ownynge
Reduynge hym of his presumption
And fodeynly parturde in his mynde
Answerd agayn shortly as I fynde

As it had byn halfende in scorne
And said furthe yf thou can vnderstonde
Eyl that a chylde be of a mayde borne
I vnderstake that this werke shal stonde
Eghen bred is dull in water ande in soude
To lacke thyngge thou canst not amende
And the werkman sother than he wende

Both of this werke said a propheted
For on the myght when that cast was borne
In tray soth hit may not be denyed
Of brass the goddesse is broke ande toorne
And al the cost / of the werke forborne
In segne onely that the lord ande syre
Ande myghty kyng of the hygh empyre

Was borne that tyme in the sylt tolbne
Of bethlem / of a pure byrgyne
To whos polver ande domynaciobne
Gatte come mekely shal enclyne
For crishely lordshippes nedes must fyne
With al thes pompe / ande solute to hym solde
When the polver of this kyng is knowe

Both wyse sybelle tolde to the senators of Rome
the byrthe of Cryst capitall

And of this tyme gone full many a yere
Wise yfthelie callde to lertyn
Spake to the Senate ful openly & cleer
His drede exhortynge of the sonnes nyre
Whiche they salde al dounes shyne
Upon a myght eueriche ful dyuerse
To hem declaryng playnly in her bryse

That eche sonne in her anylone
Whiche in heuen were so bricht and fayre
Gedogeneth sothely the generacions
That shal succede dylere and contempres
Of whiche sonne shal ranysse and appere
And of semes wage wonder donne
Unto the tyme that the eyght sonne

His stremys shadde as rede as ony blode
That spekyeth the generacion
That shal by kynde be furious and thode
And bnto vertu ful of rebellpon
Tyl there be borne a myghty champpoun
Out of the stocke of juda that shal haunte
His myghty hand her tyrannys to daunte

Whos moder shal come of the kynde
Of the chelype/ and yssue of sex kynde
And out of hem euen y lye procede
As doth a floure out of the roote spynne
And she shal be moder and vergyne
And to lode hem eke in hir rowp'rye
Whan she is borne/ hyght shal marie

And she shal be ghe by election
Moder to hym that is of polber mosse
Of whom the byrthe and the conception
Shal fully be of the holy ghooste
And he shal stretch bnto euery cooste
His grete kyngdom that shal neuer fone
And his byrthe se gan also assigne

Ande tolde forth after many sadfally
Whan he thowr tome that he shold be
Wolke godd ande may be gylt lery
Ande of the weght of his angyr
To him of wome many thynges tolde she
And specially what he shold say
As oonlye ye may haue a syght

In thellie lyste that alledgyd be
In grette austyne wher ye may the name
In the begynnynge/ of cryst Iesu se
And of his tynome/ of his grette same
Ande by ande by hold she dyd attayne
To the Ielous his compynge euery dele
Of whiche thynges/ lyke they no thynges welle

Certain parties of the Ielous talbe
Can to grette as they poue audyence
Ande lade to hir/ her tonge to withdrale
Ande wold for angre haue put hir in salence
Ande list of malice yeue no credence
Conto no word/ that she spake or sayd
Tyl that she of sodayn yre abrayd

Ande sayd o Ielous Elynde wylth the skye
Of ygnorance ande malice Indurate
Ye shal to hym of veray false enuye
Be wickedy rebelle ande obseynate
Ande ay wylth hym ye shul holden debate
Ande maggeth you/ ande al your enmyte
Yet shal he trygne ande kyngge cowlmede be

Whan he is borne in the heritage
Of his fader who so that sayth naye
Ande pwarde out of your signage
Ande of his compynge shal be no delaye
Ande tolde hem eke playnly of the daye
Of his spyrte bet than I can ryme
Ande like his word/ compynge is the tyme

The tyme of tymes/ the tyme of tye & grace
The tyme of ioye & no thyng to morne
Whiche he is borne with so faye a face
The golden world makinge to eterne
The world of pces the kyngdom of satene
Of which somtyme peca that was wyf
Of adelpus brot in her tye

Holt the prophetes prophesye
the byrthe of crosse capitall

[8]

The tyme also that is auctorised
Of prophetes in her prophesye
Where his comyng is oppnly reuysed
Reorde I take first of hym abode
That sayth thus the byble may not lye
Holt in the bylle playnly of syon
Shal ioye and helthe come bothe in one

Conto mankynde and sauacion
Where he sette his kyngdom and his see
Wherby is take the myghty regyon
Of worthy juda and he shal also be
Socour and helpe vnto ydume
Of esau that callyd is the bylle
To ioye bothe to obeye his wyll

And Naym hight juda to be sight
And had hym shalbe his festes principall
For that shal nely ensyre his sight
Assendyd is vpon his see ryalle
That shal to the be bothe to bre and walle
Chyef defence and protection
In every woo and tribulacion

Take about making mention
Of his comynge when he cometh in tyme
Of gume for his comynge
Where he shal playnly of his natyng
And his strength clere and light shal be
And of the hornes he playnly gan to sayne
That he shal holde in his handes alwayne

There is hedy his polber and his myght
That on his foyn knyght he shal helpe
And of the hylle he tellyth there a right
Holds he shal tolde hem / & the crowne helpe
And tellyth eke in wordes not a felde
Of ethyope and also Madyan
The tabernacles hold they shal quake than

And luttell eke scrybe of Jeromye
Ful openly wrote of his comynge
And luttell like by clerely wyth thyn eye
And of dauid a furion and the sprynge
Shal be susteyned to rayne lyke a knyght
And he shal do thowgh his worthynesse
Doom in erthe and also rightwysnesse

And sophone had abyde a whyle
Upon this day with deuocyon
For he shal gader out of euery ple
Of eche kyngdom and euery regyon
His peple in one of hygh affection
And also there as he makyth mynde
From the fildes of ethyope and ynde

They shal to hym deuoutly offerynge bring
And do to hym delbe sacrifice
And false goddes eke thowgh his worthynge
With real myght he shal also despyse
And from her sees make him to aryse
And fro the bondes of her dwellyng place
Of brayn force dryue him and enchaunce

And of his byrthe longe or that it felte
In a byrgon wonderfull of sight
Spake the prophete callid; danyelle
And sayd hym thought he sawe byon a myght
Lyke to beholde as he dymyd; night
A sone of man comynge with a shyn
To whom wolbet honours and; regally

There geuen was perpetually to abyde
And his kyngdom by eternyte
Shal stonde hole and; not decaye
Whiche shal not passe neyther corrupte be
Whos comynge eke wshyn he dyd; see
The holy prophete olde exchepel
Sayth thus the byble can you telle

I shal ordeyne a prudently prouyde
An herdeman my slepe to kepe sure
To wake the flockes euery tyme
To kepe hem mysely in to hit pasture
And; furthermore he doth vs eke assure
The holy prophete forthe in his wrytyng
Sothely affermyng; that there shal be a kyng

Of al folkes whos empyre shal be one
And no lenger crydd; in to slayne
Whiche in ydolis made of stocke and; stone
He shal nomore be pollute to ordeyne
Falle offerynges to god; that they seyne
And; the prophete that callid; is adgee
Ful openly who so lyst to see

Wryteth of his byrthe in a lytyl stounde
Euen lyke as he was enspryd;
That he shal moue heuen; see and; grounde
And; he that is of al most despryd;
Shal come in haste lyke a kyng a tynde
For ioye of the whiche holy iacobe
To crysteys spouse this doth speake

the glasse only light then tapers of frow
Zule frow then tapers of frow
Whiche the frow that can light alone
That that is frow frow to frow
And the frow that is frow to frow
The frow frow of frow
No frow is frow as frow as frow

Doth he much as the frow frow frow
Out of the frow the frow frow
Of frow frow frow frow frow
Whiche the frow the frow frow
Doth the frow of frow frow frow
That frow the frow frow frow
The frow frow frow the frow frow

Repeath his frow frow frow frow
At the frow in the frow
Conte the frow frow frow frow
The frow frow frow frow frow
In to the frow that doth the frow
For frow only that his frow frow
And of his frow frow frow frow

And frow frow frow frow frow
Restore frow and frow frow
Upon that day the frow frow
Of frow frow frow frow frow
And of this frow frow frow frow
Whan he is frow that in his frow
Frow frow frow frow frow

A question affore which is frow frow of
frow frow as frow frow frow frow

frow

A questyon assayed which is worthiest
of kynge wyne or woman capite 181

And as in erthe is made a questyon
Of thynges ther which was worthiest
Kynge wyne or woman in comparison
Eche y prayd & holden as for best
And at this styf as darius gan lest
Zorobabel withouten ony shewe
A loue echone had preferid trowth

And whyle they were atwarde of this thyng
Eurich holdyng his oppnyon
Zorobabel of ryght and equyte
To woman gaue his commendacion
Makynge forthwith of trowth menacion
Onely in signe as he can deuyse
Fro woman first trowth must aryse

Which is the bonde & knote principalle
Of al vertu hit may not be denyd
And therewithal so excellent ryalle
With god hym self that is next alyd
And for hit is so moche magnifyd
Therow the world of pryce and worthy fame
God chese hym self of that to be the name

And with his mouth hym self so hys hym calle
As the gospel makyth menacion
And by recorde of prophete alle
God descendyng to one conclusion
This day in erthe for our sauacion
Of a woman in maydenshede shouryng
To mankynde trowth dyd spryng

And for hys rightfulness beholds
Holt truth & mercy in a maper meete
And thus is truth spronge out of a feld
Wher the holy ghoost the myre of grace sette
To make the gasse that he for juda sette
To fautesse/ and a pure virgyn
That shal be tytle of the same lyne

The cowlde of juda to hym accept anone
And vnderfonge hit as a champpon
Whiche was hymself so many a day a gone
From sedecher alder in babilon
Whan that was made a transmygracion
By the tyraunt nabugodonosore
Whos cruelte last shal nomore

Holt our lady ought worthely to be
recommended and worshipped for the
synne of cryst capitule [Cuij]

¶ Ow he is borne that is rightful eye
That shal make better than neomys
His peple of juda for to haue repyre
Jerusalem agayn to redeyre
Though hewd that falsely doth occupy
As a foreyn thagh his cruel myght
By tyrannye and no tytle of right

Of whom the kyngdom shal not longe endure
The regne vsurpyng by exhorcion
For the lord of euerie creature
This day hath take his iust possyon
In bethlehem within a smale dongeon
He & his moder as lhy sayth but allone
To lyaue on hym / other selde or none

A lady myn how god hath made the rich
Thy self alone al richesse to possesse
For in this world none is the lyche
Of plente that fro the hande of mede
Wher the hylles of golde lye as I trowe
May no treasure in his menes trowe
A geve thy treasure for to counterpoise

For certes lady thou alone hast alle
That within heven aungels desire
The jellbel rich the treasure chestyalle
Of heven kyng of erthe lord and syre
And hym that hath al the hole empyre
Of land & see & the monarchy
Thou hast holy lady myn to give

And as austyn the holy doctour writeth
In a sermon of the natyvyte
We may to the say right as he wyrdeth
With devout herte knelyng on our kne
O blessed lady flour of Virgynyte
We prayen echone o well of our welfare
Like a moder not thy mylke to spare

Yee hym plente that is so plentuous
Of fulsomnesse aungels to fede
And yee hym solike the pyment gracious
Of thy pappes let thy condyte shede
The swete mylke al about in brede
Moderly if makynge to auals
On his saye tender lymmes smale

Glad mayst thou be that sauf list to touche
With his softe rounde lypes lyte
To haue plesaunce thy brestis for to tolde
Onely to solake thy blessed pappes lypes
And that hym list so godely to delyte
For his playe to haue so moche baste
Euer amonge thy holy mouth to kysse

And sodenly with charyte then Iocunde
Than anone thy lyght necke to embrace
With his softe tynge armes wounde
And than attones falle on thy face
And of his eyn fulfilled of al graces
A goodly like to the wardy enclyne
And so forth his chekys lere to thy

And with his fyngers molbith & eyn touche
His smalle palmys on thy chekis lerne
His ponge face keilbene thy pappys couche
And holde hym styll with al his besy payne
And grysse hem fast with his hondes lerne
For them was his treuely repaste
Thy ponge sone when he lyst bracke his faste

That was his fode and his norissyng pure
Sothfast selcer of his sustenaunce
The towe of lyf that euer dyd endure
As lyke faste into his plasaunce
With sacadye lycour of holy habundaunce
That none but he may touche ne approunke
For hit for hym was onely set a broche

For in that lycour is ful remedye
Helye & fure and playne medecyne
Agayn the venym brought in by enuye
Thowgh false engyne & malice serpentyne
When the snake made adam to dyne
Of the appyl that was intowicate
Falsely with god to make hym at debate

But now the mylke of thy pappys lerne
Ovenygne lady is to be traicle
Within thy breste spryngeth from a fayne
Agayn the deth to be to be obstacle
O how it is a passeng hygh myracle
Thow goddes myght / & by nought elles
Out of a breste to see two smalle wellys

Of a mayde springing as a ryuere
To geue hym drynke that is thynge of alle
O goodely lady/o heuynly hostesse
Whan we in myschance to the clype & callye
Somme droppe of grace let vpon vs falle
And to that callye make a wyde weye
Where thou of mercy alone bestirre the kyng

And of grace let be no scarcete
Good lady that art of grace wellete
For nolt this day in erthe is borne of the
The solthfast god of heuyn erthe and helte
Whiche is come down with vs for to dwelle
And hath of the our mortall synne y take
Of al our woo an ende for to make

Somtyme fro heuyn fyr down the manne
To refresshe the hungry in hir nedde
And that besyl in deserte right thanne
Whan moyses the peple dyd lede
But nolt this day in erthe man to fede
An humble mayde to al that synne twelde
In this deserte hath brought manna newe

Whiche to aungel is the food of lyf
To man a paste of ioye and of gladnesse
Chyef recomforthe and restoratyf
To al feble opprested with sekenesse
O good lady o myghtour of mekenesse
Gyngne shure of womankind the welte
In this deserte where as nolt we dwelle

Send vs thy manna of souerayn vertus kepe
To our comforte and consolacion
And let vs grace in thy mercy fele
For our refugeth and refecton
And in this vale of confusion
Let the grace fro the synne wyne
The manna of lyf that we may attayne

For thou alone art comforte singular
To al tho that no refuge come
This day also of mercy the quene
For which al grace is to mantente conne
The sterre also that hath brought forth the sonne
The sone of luf in erthe for to dwene
O mayde o moder o daughter of thy sonne

Which none in soth like the world began
Was sothe thyo but thy self alone
For who is he that remember can
First or last late or elys soone
So bright a sonne springe of so fayre a mone
Saue this day the sonne of luf most shene
From the awos & thou a mayde clene

Without eclipsynge or lesynge of thy light
For thou a moder and mayde sothe thyo
In vertu as e like shene and bright
O fayr wose/ o wose of jericco
That hast this day god and man also
In bethlehem borne ageyn the gyfte morowe
The nyght to daye of al our olde sorowe

Of kinnesse of our lady in
commendacion of hir capitall

fin

n Old fayr and cyresse of syon
Springynge light of nazareth
Chosen chamber of wyse salamon
Fount of the felds sweetest on holt & heth
Of whom al vertu saucth men fro deth
Of syke the water eke depurid
Wherby the lepre of Naman was curid

Laude and glorie of Iherusalem
Thou namyd art and of Israel gladnesse
Holsom cetern this day of Iherusalem
The thrist of daupd to staunce and disesse
Of paradys the welke in sothfastnesse
Joyson that shalbeth in sondry wyames
The soyle to adorne with his swete starnes

The lond also of promysse
That mylke and honye toke in few sheedys
The soyle and ground of our sauacion
With his herbes that fosterith vs and fedeth
Now blessyd mayde whos mercy euer needeth
Also that lyuen in thy scrupse
This hygh feste so for vs daupse

That in honoure of thy sone dere
We may of herte rede syng and praye
And let the starnes of thyne eyn clere
Thy seruauntes / o lady myn conueye
To contynue fully vntyl the deye
The to serue with hertely loue and drede
As moste is plesyng to thy womanshede

And this feste of festes principalle
Calld the feste of the natyvyte
Make loue & pees to rygne ouer alle
And hertis ioye with parfyt vnyte
Worde al dyscorde & let no rancour be
In hertes closed by malice or enmyte
But of thy grace so gouerne vs and gre

This hygh feste in whiche thy sone was borne
Now this mydwynter nyght with ful affection
Whyle pleus shyneth in the capytayne
We may the serue with al deuotion
And lady myn in conclusion
Now this month that calld is decembre
Upon thy seruauntes faithfully remember

Holb cygh was drawen by apthys

In Janus bifrons in colde Januarie
With frosty berde entred in the yere
And plesus chere nepth to aquarie
His watery tamps wfore fettered
Whan that his light was pale & nothyng cleere
And from hym late was passed Lucerne
The same nyght as I salde hit thynne

Yourned nelbe with tynes glad and mery
On the toun and cast his stremys down
I gan remember of the hygh ferpe
That calld is the circumacion
Holb hit lesse than by trulucion
By iuste accountynge in the calender
The first day of the nelbe yere

And thought I wold in my booke pwyde
Of this feste somwhat for to wyte
And to the gospel first I gan take hede
Of this day holb luke list to endre
Though he therof speke but a lyte
And was ful brieif and compendious
Yet of this day hygh and glorious

He waiteth playnly & sayth holb that anone
After the day of the natyure
Whan eyght dayes passed were and gone
The chylde was brought with al humylite
To the temple hildy for to be
As the salbe of the jelyps hath deuyfed
The eyght day to be circumacion

And he thereto mekely dyd obeye
And with a knyf made ful sharpe of ston
His moder loking with a pytous eye
The chyldre was coruet therby that anone
That al about the mede skode gan gone
Without abode as sapth conauenture
And for the payne he dyd endure

And for sharpnes of the sedayn smerke
The chyldre gan wepe that pyte was to her
Wherfore his moder of terryng andye herke
Out brake on terryng & myght hir self not sterte
That al bydelbyd were hir eyen clere
Whan she salde hym that she luyd so
So yonge so fayne to wepe so for woo

But he anone in al his passyon
For al that he was so yonge of age
In manere he had a compassyon
To see his moder to wepe in her rage
And put his hande vnto hir brsage
On mouthe and eyen passyngly kengne
And as he coude goodely made a signe

Withouten speche to stynte her weppng
That came to hir of moderly pyte
And she ful wel conceyuyth his menyng
From poynte to poynte & than anone gan she
To loke on hym that was so fayne to see
And his feturis considerd by and by
And in her armes wonder womanly

She took hym by & prayd hym be stille
As of moderis is playnly the manere
And he in al obeyth to his wyll
Though he were yonge & gan to chaunge his chere
And with his kercheyf she made his eyen clere
On his chekys in al that euer she may
Ful moderly the terryng wyppit alwaye

Hold in four maner of wyse cryst
Was circumcysid capitule

lxi

a nde like of alquy as it is demysid
That crist ihesu who so list to see
In four maners was trewly circumcysid
First of his fader at his natyvyte
With the knyfe of wyseful pouerte
And now this day which is not feyned
Eke wyth a knyfe by the salwe ordyned

The thyrde maner ye may eke consyder
Hold with the knyfe of grete aduersite
That he was byt first when he cam hyder
Takng for vs oure humanyte
Ande alther last with ful cruelte
For he suffrid circumcysion
Upon the crosse durng his passyon

Hold eke suffryd circumcysion in
his chosen peple capitule

lxij

e ke in four maner who so can take hede
Crist in is chosen by good Inspection
Here in this world withouten ony drede
Of nelke he suffrid circumcysion
The first is made by false detraction
That byteth alwey sothe frende ande fame
Ande the shynng of her goode name

The second is by false tyrannye
Of such that haue no conscienc at alle
But taketh alwey by curtesy wol they
Conrightfully her goodes temporalle
And the thyrd sothely is most mortalle
Of heretikes that falsely desolere
To holy chyrche & to our fayth harme

The fourth is made by effusion of blood
Of tyrannes that the body sleeth
Whan they of malice ager the fayth stode
To execute her kynge by death
To make martyrs to yelde by the breath
Whom crist ihesu eternally in glorye
Ordained hath a palme of victorie

The fyue tymes cryst in his manhode
Shed his blood by effusion
And alther first whan he dyd blede
Upon the day of circumcison
And next in soth tofore his passyon
Upon the hyll for anguysshe whan he swebte
The rede blood which al his body wette

The thyrd tyme his blood most vertuous
Can renne out by many a cruel wounde
Whan that he was this kyng most gracious
Of the ielues to a pyler bounde
The fourth tyme eke as it is founde
He spent his blood for our alther good
Whan he was naylyd hygh vpon the wood

And alther last whan longeus a fere
Thorough his herte playnly as I fynde
On caluere hym perceyde with a spere
That blood & water as bookes make mynde
Can streame down to his euen blynde
By whos vertu anone this paynym lymgh
Onely of grace recouerd hath his sight

And he lookes the as it is told
Both the pyer of his Iudges
Was by an aungel in an hene of golde
To charke brought in a byllon
And he anone of grete affection
Of this myracle for the excellenc
Made hit be kept for grete reuerenc

And at Acon but yf lookes by
Full many yere by reuolucion
In a chyrche sothely of maryl
But clerkes haue an oppynon
That the day of resurreccyon
Whan crist ihesu rose from deth to lyue
The same pyer returned as blyue

To the place whete that it cam fro
Sethen that it was sothely as I fynde
Of his manhode partecynnyng thereto
And a party longynge to his kynde
Though hit be so that bookes make mynde
That in Rome it is yet perscrupyd
And yet by yet whan this feste is scrupyd

In a chyrche whiche men of custome calle
Sancta sanctorum of olde foundation
The same day there the prestys alle
Solempnely make a stacion
Whan al the peple goon on processyon
Fully in hope better for to spede
From yere to yere there they synge & rede

And furthermore the stonys doth drupe
The same day right forthwylth anone
In the temple as they hym circumsise
He namyd was jhe of ethone
The whiche name longe or that agone
Was of the aungel tolde & sayd afore
To his moder or that he were bore

Holb the peple of god that due Josue
had in gouernaunce wery saupd
by the stedfast beleue of the
name of Ihesus capitule

lxiij

a Nid to reherce the grete worthynesse
Of this name whiche may not be defiled
My wyttes ben so dulle with tudenesse
And in the chayne of ygnoraunce guded
That I alas of konnyng am depreyed
Therow lacke of wytt in ony maner wyse
To vnderfonge so passyng hygh empyse

For this is the name who so can discerne
Most excellent and most of dygnyte
The name of namys sacrid from earne
As sayth bernard who so list to see
Fygurid first vnto Josue
Therough his knyghthode / whan he shold lede
The peple of god to saue hem in her nede

For this is the name that heris most desyre
For therein is so passyng swetenesse
For it may best hem with grace enspyre
And with plente of al goodely recheffe
It is comforte & socoure in sekeneffe
Refuyt also / reste and remedye
To al tho that felen maladye

Ayent langour the best medecyne
In al this world that olbete may be founde
For this name is so heuenly and deuyne
That heres selle hit doth with lele hounde
It curith soris / it healeth euery wounde
And saupth man fro many a siberde & spere
Where euer they ryden in sonde ferre or nere

It is first written in the booke of lxx
For wealthfast and moſte of murther
And it is the beſt perſonality
Agayn the aſſent of the byſhop
Of wicked eye to lxx perſon
And from the day hem that playen ſore
Of his vertu to helpe it doth reſtore

It is alſo ſoſt fauacion
To al that be in pouerte and in nede
It is defence/it is protection
In eche perille & in every drede
It is alſo the guerdon and the mede
In them that ben in eyde of outrage
Reprent ſynal of hir pylgrymage

This is the welke with the four ſtemys
Wherof writeth bernard in his ſentence
That though the world reſſeth al wyames
It is ſo hoſſom & of ſuche excellence
The firſt he callyth the ſterne of ſapience
Of which the ſhede moſt joly is halounde
And rightwysneſſe he namyth the ſecounde

And the thyrde he callyth holynesſe
For hit exalteth in perfeccion
The fourth alſo as I can expreſſe
Is the ſhede of our redemption
And of the firſt in concluſion
Of which the ſternes ben ſo ſweſſh and ſyne
Who ſo ſeketh a right is hoole our doctryne

And of his right to make mencion
The hoſſom welke euer doth ſholbe & flete
With mercy medlid and remyſſyon
Toſore his dome his pre ſor to lete
And of the thyrde the water is ſo ſwete
By good enſauple who ſo can dyſerne
In vertu ay hold we ſhullen be gouerne

And of the fourth to speke in spedalle
Is al our helthe and sauacion
For therein is our remedy fynall
Ageynst deth and ful protectioun
Whos blood spronge out of cistres passyon
And who that list by water to attaine
He shal hit fynde closyd in the same

Of partye richesse it is the treforde
Whiche may not waste bute lye abyde
The fyre it quenchith also of enuy
And repressith the bolnyng eke of pryde
And thowgh mekenes settith yte a fyre
And who that hath this name in remembraunce
Hym the spyrte of shouth may do no greeuaunce

It is also the myghty paynter fayre
Ageyn wanhope and dysperacion
Cristal shelde of pallas for dyspayre
Thereto auoyde the foule abusyon
And who that maketh his Inuocacion
To this name with herte of stablenesse
It geyueth hym strengthe & also sikernes

The cruel fyre & brennyng to withstonde
Of lecherie and al temptacion
It is refugit to fre & eke to bonde
That haue therein her hool affection
Whos vertu was to kynge salamon
Ful longe afore in deuyne oracle
As I fynde shewyd by myracle

Holy propheetes and martirs sufferden deth
for the name of ihesus cristus

This is the name of peoplers spotifged
In her brydng and in her lookes olde
Of apostles most highly magnified
Whos vertu they the trueste tolde
This made also martirs to be tolde
And myghty like sterne champpons
With stable herte to suffer her passions

By this name they were victorious
In her turbulent pacience to haue
This is the name that ygnasius
Had in his herte of golde dym y graue
Wherof the tyraunt gan hym sore abuse
When that he salbe his herte with a tibeigne
And letters nelbe deppete in every beigne

This is the name that to confessoris
Was ful trespasse in her abstinence
This is the name that in sharpe shouris
Of flesshly lust was hooke her defence
It gaue hem myght to make resistance
Agayn synne and anyghtly to warre
And to contynue in vertu tyl they dye

It is the feste and the figured food
Of maydenhode and of virgynpode
The oyle of grace holsum to al good
Whiche in the lampes of purgite chaspyte
Brennyng so clere with loue and charite
That worldly wyndes boystous & sholbyng
Ne may not quench the light of his shynnyng

This is the name that most pryncly melodye
Conto the ear and the swetest solon
It is the name of heuently armonye
To bope out synne and al temptation
With ful accords agaynst trypcion
It causeth hertes no longer to debate
That partyd ben with the waste of hate

This name is ioye of sorrowful in distresse
Eternal mede of hem that lye in synne
Salve vnto hem that langoure in sickness
Vesture in colde to hem that clothes mysse
Souerayn repaste hungry for to lypse
For to asaye the cruel violence
Of nedes siberde whetted byth Indigence

Crist is the name of sothfast sacrament
That first was geuen of holy unction
And he was calld first for this entent
For he for man shold make oblacon
And for he came for our sauacion
To souer allere the tise of al our blame
He hath of Ihesus worthely the name

I fynde in bookes of olde antyquyte
In his writyng as clerkys use expresse
How there were four persones of degree
Somtyme anoynted for her worthynesse
Somme for manhode & somme for holynesse
With obseruaunce and solempnyte
As was couenable vnto hir degree

Prophete prestys & they that were cowlmes
As worthy kynges of euery regyon
Anoynted withen & myghty champpolmes
Withyn palastre though for hygh renolme
Or in champelous hardy as lyon
Ente wold some quarel to darreyne
Singularly by emprise of hem liueyne

And this was al by reson as I preue
First prophete by Information
And by his doctryne most worthy of belue
And he was eke the myghty champpon
That singularly for our sauacion
Fought with the fend & had of hym victorie
Maugre his myght & wanne the palme of glorie

And he was preste man to counsaile
That compassed was out of his heritage
Whom a serpent falsely dyde egge
Of false makar in a fowyn age
And he was borne onely by signage
To be a kynge and by politer carne
Whan he is crouned his peple to gouerne

Holy cryst Ihesu was sothe prophete preste
Kynge and myghty champpon capiteyn lxxij

n O holy crist Ihesu sothfast preste & kynge
And for mankynde most worthy barriour
Prophete also and trewest in kynge
Be thou our helpe / be thou our socoure
And like a kynge be thou our gouernour
And champpon to helpe vs in our neede
And like a prophete to wisshen vs and rede

O crist Ihesu to the I clype and crye
Fro day to day to helpe vs and relieue
And of thy grace be wretches for to gye
Or that thou thy rightfulness proue
Let praye first the to mercy meue
And of thy swerde of vengeance be manace
Let trowth afore thy rightfull dome embrace

For of our helpe thou art the pylle
Ageyn dyspayre hooly our sustenaunce
Our strengthe our myght our refuge for & newe
In eche perille to saue vs from myschaunce
Thou art our force & our sustenaunce
And in myschance whan drede hold be assaile
Thou art our shelde thou art our supportaile

Thou art myghty and thou art meke also
Thou art rightfule/and thou art merciable
Lamke and thou calldst bothe the
And sothfast kyng whos myghte is immutabill
To repentance / by thyng not ungrace
And euer aforne in possyng of thy salbe
Spees to preferre/or right his liberte may durb

And to bringe the lost there ageyn
Out of deserte in to his pasture
That was errant yole / and in wyne
O crist ihesu of thy kengne cure
More redy ay to saue and to cure
Al that ben sore / & scabbede eke with synne
Rather with pyte than thou with reddur wyne

Holb thou that art the very rightfule signe
Al that is crokedy goodely to redresse
And mayster of mercy al our myschance fyne
O crist ihesu welke of al swetnesse
Lord of pyte & lord of rightfulesse
Haue thou vs this day compassyon
That calld is thy circumacion

And graunte vs grace with delbe muerre
This hygh feste so noble and so dygne
Worshyp & habylde deuyde of al offence
And be to vs goodely and kengne
That were this day markedy with the signe
And the curre by the salbe ordynedy
Is very soth & no thyng feynedy

And so as thou that neuer dydest trespasse
Thowld thy mekenesse and lowly subieccion
Suffre woldest this day of thy grace
For our offence / hille circumacion
So apte from vs al temptation
Of worldly lust & make the flesch to serue
To the spryte tyl the body sturue

And graunte vs grace to kepe chaste & chere
O crist ihesu whyle that we here
Throgh the prayer of that heavenly queene
That is maye and moder eke in heu
With helpe of hir graunte vs this nethe pete
So prudently with vertu be prouyde
Our hys at that we may circumside

And crist ihesu be praye vnto the
Let thy name whether we ryde or goe
In eche perill and eche aduersite
Be our defence agaynst our mortal foe
To make hem stonde styll as ony stoon
And al that casten vs falsely to waye
Make her malice mekely to obeye

To thy name & make hem stonde al backe
Or they haue polber to halunte her cruel myght
And wicked spirits so horrible & blacke
That kesy ben to waye vs day and nyght
Let thy name dryue hem out of sight
And in our forfede whan we the ihe impryse
Make vs of grace her malice to oppresse

For to thy name hooly we commende
Our lyf our deth body herte & alle
Our soules also whan we hens wende
O crist ihu o lord immortal
Charyng to the whan thou be come shal
To saue al tho from eternal shame
That haue ful fayth & hooly tryst in thy name

Holb by the prophete of balaam watche whan
made vpon an hyll capitule

lyvj

¶ Thou hadst whos sight offendith sw so fern
Thowlt the woundes of the sprynge nyne
Withouthen whom phisus ne no secret
Upon heuen polver hath to shyne
Let nolt thy sight my desires enlumyne
That thowlt thyn helpe I may my style gyne
Somwhat to sey of thyn appharyng

And let my best benygne lord be deloyd
Doun with somme dowe from thy mageste
That was this day by a sterre & sheldoyd
Out of the este to worthye kynges the
Whiche on this nyght of thy natyvyte
Can first aspye the bright temys clere
Of this sterre on the heuen apere

Of whom the sprynge was not canfille
Of fortune ne sodayn auenture
For many a day or this thyng bespyll
And many a yere by recorde of scripture
With a waytyng & wonder bespyll
In temys soth as I remembre can
A certeyn kynde towarde the ocean

Whiche of the stocke and the lyne cam
Who so list loke in booke from a ferre
And of the blode of olde balaam
That somtyme had with his asse berre
The whiche sayd there shold be a sterre
Out of jacob and from jsaacke
At be that he therof no tyme coude telle

Upon whos bord fully in beleue
There shold aryse such a sterre sight
Weryn libelue chosen the trowth for to preue
Within mydwynter euer sw nyght to nyght
Whan in aquarie phisus shadde his sight
For to alwaye in al the best wyse
Whan this sterre in heuen wold aryse

Ande these eldres heren of hymne
Of salam as ye haue heren me telle
That yett by yett shold take her
Down on hylle besyd a spylle wellle
Ande ther in fete a ardeyn spere dille
Anoynted & bathed in clothes lye
Ande they of custome to speke but a lyke

But in prayre & in ardeyn rytes bide
They must waite ande waite in specialle
Ande none of hem playe to be excusid
Down this hylle namyd Victoralle
Ande yf one dyd that his sone shalle
This statute olde his place occupie
Or ellys one that were next of alye

Ande this complaynt duryng many yett
By custome bide of antiquyte
As perus went by meynynge circuler
So they kept her tymes by degres
Ande eche yett twen ardeyn dayes the
By calkyng cast ande computation
Sought & chosen out by good election

For to alwaye the bryde by the morowe
Of this stete with his lames glade
Whiche salam sayd shold auoyde her sorowe
At his bryde whos tyme may not fade
To helpe his sight in euery shroude & shade
Without lyeftynge or dallyng to decline
Tyl at the last for the same fyne

To see this stete most famous of renown
On the heryn whan hit shold appere
The worthy kynges as made is mention
Down the hylle to gyde goon in fete
For cause they who so list to here
Were of the stocke of salam down descendyd
Wherfore of sort the hylle they be ascendyd

As fyl on hem by custome to suete
At a certeyn of the yere by reuolucion
And on this hyll eſtward they toke hede
By good auncle in her Inſpection
The ſame nyght of the Inarnation
Whan criſt was born in beethem of mary
The ſame oute / the ſterne they aſpye

Of nelbe arcyon in the oryent
Ful luſty of whom the ſemes light
Can enlumyne al the firmament
From eſte to weſt it paue ſo clere a light
That of the ſeremes euery maner bygyght
Aſtonyde was they were ſo bright & ſhene
And to the eye / ful perſant for to ſene

The which ſterne dwelte his courſe of right
Toward the hyll lyke as bookes telle
Where the kynges the long wynter nyght
It to alwayte ſolystare dwelle
And there anon vpon her knees felle
And thankyd god with al her hertes luſte
Which hath not hem defrauded of her luſt

Holb the thre kynges preceptyd
the ſterne capitule

lyly

a And al that nyght to gyder as they wolde
vpon this ſterne that ſhone ſo fayr & clere
And ſodaynly vplward as they gan ſe
They ſalbe a chyldre aboute the ſterne appere
So yonge ſo fayr in a golden ſpere
Ful ſpally ſtonde / & aboute his hede
A large croſſe that was of blood ful rede

¶ iij

The which chylde spake to him anone
Aboue the helle with foyr and chere langage
And bad him fast that they shold gone
In to iuda right as our tyme
And schalbe alwey the sterre for a signe
That shal hem bringe to that regyon
Where the kyng most worthy of unolyn

Was borne that tyme to haue the regallie
Of iheres land of trump delibe right
To whom the sterre dyd speake
Whan he was borne with his clew light
And they anone whan passed was the nyght
The next morowe no longer list abyde
But toward hym cast hem for to ryde

With grete arraye and real aparyle
As was sittynge to theyr worthynesse
They shope hem forth/ & for they nolde not fayle
To do honoure to his noblenesse
With hem they toke golde & grete richesse
To spende & geue/ & also for they ment
With yefers grete the chylde to present

And forth they gone no longer wold they tarye
Thorow many a lond/ & many a dyuerse ple
Eueriche of hem on a dromedarye
Whiche weren so swyfte that ful many a myle
They passed/ haue within a litel whyle
That in the space of dayes thyrteyne
By conduyte onely of the sterre shene

They entrid ben in to Iherusalem
That of iuda was the cheef cyte
Conuerped/ euer with the bright beem
Of the sterre that was so sayr to see
And whan they amyd the cyte be
Not astonped/ ayed/ in audyence
Where is the kyng greetest of reuerence

Of helles borne for to bere the crowne
Whos sterre we haue seen in the orient
That from heuen cast his shynynge dowlne
Whiche al the world vnder the firmament
Is glad to see / & we of one entent
Haue yestes brought out of our contere
Hym to honoure in his ryall see

And whan herode of theyr comynge knewe
He troubleyd was / & also al the towne
And gan anone to chaunge chere and helpe
And made in haste a conuocacion
Of al the prestys dwellyng enywhere
To knowe clerely / & be certeyned
Of the place that was specified

Of prophetes where crist shal be borne
And they anone the trouthe to hym tolde
In bethlehem as they ful longe afore
Folowen out in her booke olde
And al the maner to hym they vnfolde
From poynt to poynt as mathew maketh mynde
Redith his gospel and there ye shal hit fynde

Holb kyngz herode sent for the
thre kynges capituls

xxx

a And whan herode gan the kynges calle
And of this matre entrid pryuelly
And curiously holb that it was falle
He gan enquire & appoynt wisely
And of the sterre also by and by
He appoynted hem and in wordes felde
Holb & what wyse it gan first helde

And when they had told hym every tale
They departed out of his presence
But first he bidde hem to enquire
Of the childer with al her diligence
And when they had doon hym reuerence
He charged hem vnder boordes fayer
Hombarde by hym al gales to repaire

To geue hym clere information
Of her excheit & of the childer also
Surely offering by false collusion
That he hym self wolde some after goo
Unto the childer and his deuour do
To worshipp hym / & al vnder colours
As the worme / or serpent vnder sbours

Darith ful of tre & kepith hym couertly
Of kynde malice tyl they a tyme see
To shede her tynym / & than sodaynly
At attones when they vnbarese be
They stynges and sheldyn her cruelte
And her tynym vnder sbours fayer
Ful of tre is hyde tyl they may appaie

Right so thou serpent ful of iniquyte
False tynge ful of doublenesse
Vnder fayer colour of humilitie
Thy tynym darith / & also thy falsenesse
O thou treaunt o rote of cursidnesse
Thou brede of malice most mortalle
What denyst thou / hym that knoweth al

To dysseue with thy stely wybe
What can suger vnder galle fayne
What denyst thou the kynges to begyle
And of malice kynges hem in a trapne
Of whos comyng though that thou dysdayne
It may not lere playnly ne fayne
For of thy purpos playnly thou shalt fayne

For by grace they shullen in quene
Maugre thy myght al the daunger passe
For though that thou with warden long stode
Maliciously from her deeth compassse
They shullen scape despite of thy face
For al the comiecte of thy pryuaris wyse
As the story shal anoue dysse

And so with Symon in his herde y folke
He gaue hem leue passe thorough his tyme
In her repaire hym castynge to be brooke
If they retorne ageyn by Iherusalem
And so the sterre hem brought to bethleme
And lyne right the chyldes bedd aboue
Where as he laye styll gan to houe

Of the ioye that the kynge had when
they founde cryste capitulo lxxij

6 Not who the ioye coude telle or endyte
Or with his moulthe the myrthe expresse
Or who can playnly with his penne write
The grete blysse or the gladnesse
Whiche they made in solthfastnesse
After her iourney & her longe weye
Aboue the holde when they the sterre seye

That gan to hem clerely wryte
Without more the chyldes dwellyng place
And they anon fast gan hem hys
With lusty herte & glady of chere and face
To alyght down in a lytel space
They made hem redy & with reuerence
They entryn in / & came in to presence

Where as the chylder most sweetly of trefure
Was with marga in an oger stalle
And humbly the kynges at the
Forth they went toward the stalle
And brought her trefure & her yestes alle
As treuously as they coude drugg
And hym presented in at her best wyse

Lyke as her ostar cunicle after other
Makynge theyr present with al humylyte
Lyke her age as brother after other
Gold franke & myrr they gave hym al the
After custome of perr and calde
For of that kinde whan kynges present make
The custome is such yestes for to take

And this was doon with forson and plesure
In very soth and grete habundaunce
For in her present was no scarfete
For of richesse they had al suffysaunce
Wherefore they cast with deuoute obaysaunce
Of due right with the chylder to parte
Of her trefure or that they departe

And for golde is payed for tribute
As hit is founde of antiquyte
Therefore the kynges for a maner sute
That they hym ought of very debte
They brought hym golde out of her contree
And gave it hym withouten repentaunce
Boole of herte for a recognysaunce

And franke also as clerkis can drugg
Orpyned is in conclusioun
To god onely to make sacrefise
With contrite herte and deuotioun
Therefore to hym for oblacion
They brought franke to signefie than
That he was to the sothfast god and man

And for they bold in al thyngs else
To his hyghnes with al her lyp cut
In token he shold for mankynde deye
They brought myrr to his sepulture
For like a man / deith he most endure
And with his blood shed in his passion
For our trespass for to make redemption

In frank also who that can disseine
Is vnderstonde the hygh mageste
Of his powe which that is eterne
And eke also his hygh deyte
The gold betokeneth his hygh dygnyte
And myrr declarith vnto vs at alle
Of his manhode that he was mortalle

And golde betokeneth of loue the feruence
That he to man had of affection
And frank betokeneth the souerayn excellence
In holynesse his conuersacion
And myrr betokeneth the tribulacion
That he suffrid and al the greet penaunce
For vs in erthe by contynuaunce

In gold he was knowe as a kynge
In frank a preest who so can take hede
Of myrr also this day the offerynge
Was kyngynge onely to his manhe de
And thus he was withouten ony drede
Bothe kyng & preest as I discryue can
And for our sake in erthe a mortal man

In golde also most glorious metalle
Fygurid was his hygh deyte
In frank also that is so coropalle
The solle also of cryst most parfyt of degre
And myrr betokeneth how he his dygnyte
His flessch the which by disposicion
May neuer suffre no corruption

And of this grette passenge murmur
Full of myserie & heuynly purpur
And when they had made there present
Unto the chyldre as sitting on his kne
And with grete aungst they began toholde & see
Dofore that they tyme from that place
His godely chere & his sage face

Consyderynge his featuris by and by
With grete insight / and humble entencion
And as the more they loke besely
The more they thynke in her Inspection
And thoughten alwey as in her reason
Though kynde & godd hath sette in one fygure
The beaute hooly of euery creature

It myght not in solhemis beuen ben liche
To his faynes / neyther peregall
For he that is aboue nature riche
Hath made this chyldre fayrest in speciall
For in his face they be holden alle
The hool beaute / & faynesse eke also
Of heuen & erthe to gyde & sothe & lio

Wherfore no wonder though they hem depyte
Most passengely vpon hym to see
For they in herte reioycean hem not alpe
On hym to looke that they haue byberte
For as the more playnly that they be
In his presence the purpyle hote fyre
Of herte ioye hem brent in desyre

And of one thyng goodd hede they took
Holt that the chyldre demurely cast his sight
Tolward hem & godely gan to loke
On her face with his eyen bright
And holt that he put his armes ryght
Goodely to hem makynge a maner signe
To them of thankynge / with chere ful langage

And of his moder they moche thyngs enquire
Tolde hym his byrthe with humble affection
And she answereth most feynynge of chere
Ful prydently to every question
With chere demure / & look y cast adoun
With al the portre of womanly clemnesse
His self demenyng cheefly with mekenesse

Of vertuous pouerte and mekenesse
of our lady capitule lxxiiij

O she that was of heuen and erthe quene
And of helle lady and pryncesse
O what was she alas that myght sustene
To be proude considerid hir mekenesse
O pryde alas o rote of our distresse
Though thy boote aboue the skye shalbe
Thy byldyng hygh shal be brought ful folbe

O surquedrye alas why nylt thou see
How that she had heuen in hir demeyne
And lady is sothe of bond and see
And of the aytre welbene the poles elbeyne
And of the embracyng of the golden chayne
Yet vnto hir I say in sothfastnesse
Aboue al this agreyd hir mekenesse

O pompe elate with thy chere folde
Remembre & see and like how that she
Of whom kynges haue ioye to behold
In her presence to knele on her knee
Though she of women be hest in degree
Take heed & see how lowly in a stable
How that she sat this lady honourable

Wen there of golde any chaces founde
Of sylke damask or rich shewynge
Or was there any aboute her bedde founde
Or was there any velvet caryng
Or was there any sampe or satene
Or were there any tappes large or hyde
The naked grounde to cover or to hyde

Or was her paleys hylt of tyme & stone
Or the pylers set on marbyle guays
Or the grounde paupd on to gone
Or fressh parkours glasid bright as day
Or were there chambers of any
Or for estates was there any halle
Saw a dongeon & and an oyes stalle

Or of hir bedd was the apparell
Of golde & sylke cortyned large aboute
Or were the shetis of songe or hyde entayle
Kytte out of raynes / nay withoute doubt
Or were there any ladies for to dwelle
To hir hyghnes with besy obseruaunce
Or of maydens any attendaunce

O as me semeth of terry delbe right
Ye wyminen at sholden take heed
With your perles & your stones bright
Holt that our quene flour of womanhede
Of no deuyse embroldoyd hath hir bedde
Ne furred with ermyne / ne with crisy graye
Ne martyr ne saynt I tolde in good fay

Was none founden in her garmente
And yet she was the fayrest for to see
That euer was vnder the firmamente
That me semeth ye sholden haue pyte
To see a lady of so hygh degre
So semely attyrd o ye wyminen alle
So natow chyd in an oyes stalle

Let be your pryde and your affection
Of rich array & no thyng you desire
In worldly pompe and such abusion
Of soudry clothes redde blacke and whyte
And be wel bare of the spere hys
Of cruel deith and the fel smerte
My counceyl is to lyste by your lerte

To that lady & to that worthy quene
That you may lyste helpe in your neede
And you relieue in euery woo and tene
And deliuer from al myschaunce and drede
And thynke playnly & take right good heed
That al shal passe away & eke needesse
Whan ye list beene & al your semelynesse

Let hem afore be to you a balen drede
Ysolde Eleyne/and eke polyxane
Hector also & dydo with hir chere
And rich candace of ethyope quene
Lugge they not graue vnder coloures grene
And yet al this may not your pryde assame
Notwithstondyng that ye shal doo the same

And after deith abydeyth no memorye
For ay with deith comyth forgetfulnesse
And fare wel than awaye and al byngsforpe
Saue onely vertu that stondith in sikernesse
I take recorde of the hygh mekenesse
Of hir that is of holynesse welke
Of whom I thynke sothely for to telle

Holt that she satte for al her worthynesse
Holdyng her chylde lowly on the grounde
And kynges knelyng as ye haue lerte expresse
Beholdyng hir in vertu moste habounde
Tyl at the last they haue a lyfse founde
To take her leue/and the same nyght
They gan to ryde homeward al her myght

Both the aungel warned the three
kynge to passe not by herodes but by
another waye capitulo lxxiii

a And sayng after on the next nyght
Whyle they slepte at her lodgyng place
Came an aungel apperyng with grete light
And warned hem that they nought ne trewe
By herodes but that they shold go
Withoute taryng / in al the haste they may
To her kyngdom by another waye

And in shorte tyme to thre regyon
They ben repayred / the gospel telleth thus
And of her names to make mencion
The first in ebrew was callyd appelous
The next amarus the thirde damarus
And in greke the first galgatha
And sarachym / the thirde malgalatha

And in latyne as booke make mynde
The first of hem namyd was jasper
And the second playnly as I fynde
Lyke myn auctour wher as I dar
Callyd was and namyd balthazar
And the thirde ye gete of me no more
As I rede was callyd melchior

Of whos repaire as somme booke seyn
That first of al they wenten to the see
And retourning to her kyngdom ageyn
They shippyd hem at thare the cite
For whiche herode of cursyd craelte
In thare made al the shippes burne
Wherof write dauid the saluter yf ye henne

And? Into you clerely to speake
Tolde chynge this feste & thys solemnyte
Wherof is sayd? this word? epyphanye
Whiche is a word? of grete auctorite
And sayd? and? compoluned? who so can see
Of epy first / and? phanos soth to sayn
And one word? compoluned of thys tibeigne

Cometh this word? of epyphanye
And? this word? epy by dyscription
Is sayd? of heyght as I can signefye
And? of a sheldyng by demonstracion
As phanos sayd? / and so by good? rason
Epy and? phanos bothe knyghte in fere
Is a sheldyng that doth a hoste appere

And? for this day also? was the sterre
Whiche cristes byrthe and? Incarnacion
With his sterres gan shede from so fere
From este to weste in many a regyon
Wherof this feste in conclusion
As ye toforne haue herde me speake
This feste is callyd? of epyphanye

The whiche feste hath a prerogatyf
Of myracles notable in specialle
For thynges four? brought in cristes tyf
Werren on this day by his polver ryalle
The first of al for a memoryalle
Is of the kynges as ye haue herde me sayne
Whiche were in ydel to restre agayne

The second? is / it is sothely tolde
That crist ihesu / this day of saynt John
The yere when he was thyrty wynter olde
Baptised? he was in the fflum Jordayne
At whiche tyme thre kynges Under one
Appered this day worthy of memorye
The first was that from the hegh glorie

The fathers booke as clerkes list endyte
Cam down to erthe that may myghte shewe
And like a doloure with fere ferdys wyghte
The holy ghoost also dyd appere
And cast Iesu the fathers sone endite
This day apperyng in our mortal kynde
Was of saynt Johan baptyst as I fynde

And for as moche as they al thre
Thys day were seyn by sothfast apparence
They keynge one in partyke bynde
Therefore this day of moste reuerence
Namyd is trewly in this sentence
Theophanos for god in treble wyse
Ther in apperid as ye haue herde deuyse

For theos is as moche for to mene
As god in englysshe yf ye list to see
And phanos / as shewyng withouten bene
As ye haue herde afore receyved of me
For in erthe o god in tryumpe
This day apperid withouten ony lye
Ye truly may it calle theophanye

The iohan cryst was olde thyrty yere
This day he turned water in to wyne
That passengly was to the eye cleere
And of tarrage only good and fyne
The whiche he sent to archdeacon
And for this myracle only vertuous
In galile was shewyd in an hous

This same day whiche man dyd espye
As holy chirche maketh mencion
Therefore hit is named bethphanye
For beth in englysshe by dyscription
Is calld an hous or a mancion
Of whiche myracle renomed of fame
Bethphanye this day hath the name

He in the yre of his passion
For in deserte this day also I rede
With huge fyre thorough his quene forsoke
Fyue thousand I fynde that he dyde fede
Of which myracle yf ye take hede
This day is last namede phagysfange
Lyke as first was cleppte egyptange

For this word phage in to our entente
Is sayde of fedynge of refectioun
For which myracle passynge exalteth
That is so famous & so hygh of renown
Lyke as the gospel maketh mencion
Therefore this day amonge the other alle
Be iustely may / it phagysfange calle

A declamacion of the thre kynges
of theyr thre pefes capitule lyxxv

n Owe crist ihesu this day this hygh feste
We the beseeche with herte wyll & thought
Ouely of mercy to heere our requeste
For the myrcles that thou therein hast wrought
For loue of hem that the so ferre haue sought
The worthy kynges that came out of alde
The to honoure in bethlehem the cyte

And though the prayers of the kynges thre
That for thy loue taken her hyage
Jhesu defende vs from al aduersite
And make vs stronge & sure in our passage
In this eyple ande pordus pylgrimage
With our foo men of malice ande of pryde
Which haue vs byseth on every syde

Thy which our golde of purpore chaunge
Wolde be hurne by perfection
That the shold offer of purpore into the
Of hartly love & hych devotion
Ande the our franke of contemplation
Wherwith be shold make our sacrifice
Of hys dysdayne & make the dyspense

For golde of trouthe is falslye noli alayde
By fained love and symplacion
Ande fapth with stalde is compt & fupped
With double tonges & detraction
Our franke also of hych perfection
That shold becomme clere above the skye
Is with the coode meddy of enye

That it alas yue may no light
In the center of trewe affection
For day of trouthe is turned in to nyght
Thowth false reporte / & false suspicion
Ande thus good fapth is wyllyd by so down
Ande trewe menyng derkyd with a shyre
That be in englyssh calen flatterye

Ande thus our offeryng goeth almoste wronge
Of golde of franke / for ought I can espye
Ande our myght hath be bespente ful longe
Cos to perscure from al such trecherye
For noli is turned in to procurye
Our holynesse & that is grete wylthe
Ande cause whye / for faine hath banysshed trewe

But caise Iesu that al this mayste amende
Ande that is a mysse in eche state wylthe
This hych feste such grace to be sende
That be the golde of seableness
Ande the franke of purpore holynesse
May on this day present into the
With al trewe hert as dyd these kynges the

And graunte also bothe to hygh ande lowe
To haue such myrr in hie a uerbaue
That euery wyght his owne salutes knowe
And that no man be hasty of sentence
To deme lightly before or in absenre
For soveryn dome meynre thus pynomunre
Hath a longe taylor shellyngre of repentunre

For in sothnesse yf that euery man
Wold make a myrrour of his owne mynde
To deme hym self of thyngre that he wel can
And open his eyen that hath be longe blynde
To see his salutes that he coude fynde
I trowe in soth for ony hasty tyme
Harmeles fro dome his felow shold asaye

Hold the shold doo this offeryng
ghoostly capitule

Ex vi

n Oly crist Ihesu that knowest euery herte
And no thyng may be hyde fro thy presence
He from thyne eye deelyne ne aserke
Graunte vs this day of thy magnyficance
The golde of loue / the franke of innocenre
And the chaste myrr of clene entencion
So to present in our oblacion

To thyne hyghnes that it be acceptable
Whyle that we lyue euer from yere to yere
As was the offeryng in bethleme in a stable
Made vnto the e to thy moder dore
Of the kynges that with the sterres clere
Of a sterre conueyed were by guerd
Where thou laye / to come to the place

Ex viii

Ande take the this day the churche ande alle
Thou blessed quene of kynges emperesse
That thou the sone foldest in a stable
That chaste myghte of vergynall chynesse
That thou this feste o sterre of holynesse
Conueys our offeryng to that sterre for
Where next the sone thou hast the soueraynste

Ande goody lady in this fowllful vale
Of troble ande woo & of heynesse
Sithen thou of iacob art the right scale
The waye of lyf / the ladder of holynesse
Tolward that conde the euen weye dresse
Ande make the way thyder to assende
Where euer blisse & ioye hath none ende

For artes lady in this lyf we lacke
Of sothfast ioye al the suffysaunce
Saue amonge the kinde afore the lacke
Wherbyth the sone was somtyme thy plesaunce
Ande be reioycyng as by remembraunce
Onely by lyknes to lye on thyn ymage
Ande on the sone with his fayr vrsage

But o alas there is but a lyknesse
Of portraiture that doth grete offence
For we may not haue ful the blessednesse
Of thy vrsage / neyther of thy presence
Ande so to be grete harme doth apparence
Whan that we see of our desyre we fayle
We may playne / but it may not auayle

Yet day by day of trulve affection
We goone of nelve thy lyknesse for to see
Where of one thyng we haue compassion
To see the lyste that so humble be
To stonde so nere beloued the sone ande the
The mude asse ande the oxe also
Ande than we say complaynyng in our woo

With al our hertes o what thyngs may this be
To see that lord in a tuche be
That hath the huen in his pouste
And al this worlder polver hath to geve
O how it is that the regallys
Of huen & erthe is brought down so lowe
That no man list synnethe his polver anowe

And fodeynly our hertes gynneth cote
For astonynge & is for too mygh make
So grete a quene when that we beholde
Allone sittynge al dysconsolate
So fayr so good & of so hygh estate
Most womanly and so benygne of chere
Thy sone & the to gyder sittynge in fere

In the bondes of so narow a dongeon
Whereof al erthe tremble shal and quake
And every wyght by lamentacion
Wepe & playne syghte and sorow make
O blyssful quene onely for thy sake
To see on the none other waytynge
But kyspe with hye hem self fedyng

But in one thyng comforte yet we fele
O good lady so thely yf we see
Thre worthy kynges afore thy face lene
Wrynge her yestes with al humylyte
And hem gouerne lyke to thy degre
With meke attendaunce & ful besy care
But al this thyng we see but in picture

Alas the whyle & yet it doth be case
And in party aslagith our gremour
For no thyng may our sorowe so appease
As euer of the to haue a remembraunce
For in the lady / is hool our sustenaunce
Though we lyue in langour for thy absence
Yet good lady for thy magnyficence

To the seruantes of the gentes for
And to thy sone be for be a mene
This hygh faste which lenger than the
In which thou wert honoured like a quene
With myrrour & frankincense & golde that shone so clene
Now for the honour this day was to the
And for the due of the kynges thre

When we shal parte out of this wooful lyf
And make an ende of this captivitye
Or breake through his mortal scryf
The fende bytrape be thou his cruelle
Now that tyme lady of the benygnyte
Agens the snaris of this dardful werre
To lyf eterne be thou our hody sterre

Now our lady was purifyed capitula lxxvij

g Forge and prayre laude & hygh honour
O blessed quene be yeven vnto the
That wert of golde the chaste chaste towre
Surely founded vpon humylite
Sette with the keye of clene virgynyte
From al synne fully to be assuryd
And of the holy ghoost wounde about enuryd

That neuer no burning of flesshly hete
Assayle myght thyn holy tabernacle
With delbe of grace thy chesete was so swete
Fulfilled with vertu onely by myracle
God chose thy wombe for his tabernacle
And habowbed it so clene in euery coost
To make hit sacrifice for his owne ghoost

Notwithstanding that thou wert so cleane
Above al other by election
Of mekenesse onely o thou humyly quene
Thou hast to haue none indignacion
The day to passe of thy purgacion
But to fulfill the precept of the lawe
In every thyng & not a poynt withstandinge

But euen like as hit is specified
Leuitica who so can vnderstande
To the temple to be purged
Thou mekely come thy offering in hande
Al be the lawe sette on the no bond
For it is there made mencion
Touchyng the lawe of purification

If a woman conceiue by a man
And haue a chyld by medlynge hem betwene
That it be a male the lawe requyeth that
Fowrty dayes that she shold be vnclene
And kepe hir close that no man shold hir sene
And after that she shold hir offeringe
In lawe exprest to the temple bryng

But taketh heed in conclusion
How this lawe like as ye shul fynde
He was not put but by condycion
Onely to them that corrupt them by synne
Thorough touch of man/of such is made mynde
The dayes nombred of hir purgacion
To come and make her oblacion

And bryng a lambe the which in sacrifice
Shold al be brought in the holy place
And a pygeon as lawe doth requyre
She shold eke offer as for hir trespass
And than al fynde from hir to enchaunce
She of the prece be hollded & sacrificed
Returneth home & fully purged

And of the lady in his possession
Mighty no launce onely for power
Than holdy she take for hir oblation
The myghty dolours & the myghty goo fare
Or the pynne like as y may fe
Leuisti ther as by dyspencion
Of this offeryng is made dyscription

But this mayde who so can take hede
Excludy was fro this condicion
That hat a chyld without manns fede
Depnyd euer cleue from al corrupcion
Wher though she was from such oblation
By salde excepte / & was vnder no charge
For hir clennesse stondyng at hir large

For of her wombe the chysster Virgynal
Was euer eache bothe first and laste
Chysed & shytte as castel principal
For the holy ghoost demysed hit and caste
And at bothe tymes shytte as like faste
In her chyldeyng nomore thorow growe p broke
Than at hir conceyvyng / than it was In lode

For nature withouten ony scrup
Repugnaunce or ony resistence
Haue this mayde prerogatyf
As moder to haue experyence
Onely of chyldeyng / & fele none offence
Nether of sekenece ne of such maner woo
In traueleyng as other women doo

She was exempt from al such passyon
For hir clennesse / & so was none but she
And yet her tyme of purificacion
She dyd abyde of hir humylyte
And like as salde ordeyneth by decree
After al this of custome as she ought
To the temple she hir offeryng brought

To yowr ensauple onely of mekenesse
To the salde she mekely boldy olde
Fro poynt to poynt the gospel sayth expresse
And on no syde boldy it not withstyre
And though that she hure of golde no kepe
To bye a lambe for pouerte conseruynge
Yet she ful mekely to make hir offerynge

Brought also turtles as it is sayd aforne
That was the offerynge of yowr folke echone
Whiche to the temple whan that she hath borne
As custome was she offerid hem anon
And after that olde symeon
With humble herte and a ful pyne
The chyld embracyng in his armes threwe

Holb Symeon receyvyd crist of our lady
in the temple capitule lyxviiij

Of his moder goodely gan hym take
Of buyng herte and grete deuocion
And such a ioye of hym gan to make
Within hym self of hygh affeccion
That he ne coude neyther by word ne soun
Outward declare neyther with chere ne face
The passenge ioye that gan his herte embrace

And he was rightful holy and vertuous
This olde man this blessed symeon
Dreadful also and passengly famous
Amonge the prestys to reken hem euerychone
That was expectant & ful longe agone
Of the comforte and consolacion
Of Israel in his entencion

For he had anſwer of the holy ghoſt
In his purpoſe that he ſhould ſee
The ſpyte of croſt that is of wolder moſte
And eke ſo doth that he ſhal goo free
To the tyme of his natyurte
And to the day that with his eyen olde
The ſpyte of hym that he may beholde

The which day that with his eyen olde
And for that he by reuelacion
The tyme knewe he hath the waye holde
To the temple with hygh deuocion
To ſee of criſt the preſentacion
Holt that marye and Joſeph eke alſo
The chylde preſentde and her offering doo

And for that criſt was the fiſt borne
After the lalbe in his tēdyr age
Not of leui as ye haue herde tofore
But of iuda comen by ſignage
Therefore his moder moſt holy of byſage
Hye offering made liſt not for to ſerue
For hym ageyn to paye thyllnyges fyue

Lyke as the cuſtome of the lalbe was
He mekely made his redemption
And ſymeon beholdyng at this caas
Full ſteply in his Inſpection
For hys burning / by affection
Of hys herte ſodaynly abrayed
Holdyng the chylde euen thus he ſayd

Holt wher and whan ſymeon made
Nunc dimittis ſeruum tuum dñe ſecundum
Verbum tuum in pace capitulo

lxxix

o Blissful lord of thy hygh grace
If that thou list now thou mayst me late
Out of this lyf in rest and pite to part
And suffre me to dye in quyet
For now to me deeth is wonder swete
Now haue I seen thy helthe and thy socour
And of mankynde lord and saupour

Whiche thou hast dyght afore the faces alle
Of eche peple to make hem gladd and light
To lette thy grace so to erthe falle
Thorow al the world to shewe his lympe bright
That may be callyd for comfort of his light
Unto al the gentyls the reuelacion
The ghorpe also and the sauacion

Of Israel thy peple in specialle
To boye hem out of al derknesse
And marie ful meekely listenyth alle
And gan merueyle with grace aduersidnesse
Of the wordes that he gan expresse
And Joseph eke gan to wonder also
And symeon hem blessenge bothe two

Spake to marie and sayd in audyence
Beholde and see in thyne Inspection
How he is put in tyme and offence
Of many one here in his regyon
And to somme in resurrexion
That shal releue thorow his myghty grace
And thorow thy sorow shal a sharpe swerde part

Of herely wo to see his passyon
That passyngly shal be byter and felle
To open hertes by confessyon
Her sorowful thoughtes openly to telle
And anna than doughter of phanuelle
Borne of the trybe of the symonde
Callyd after sothely as I rede

Of the ioye that anna the daughter
of phineas had: when crist was offryd:
in to the temple capitall

lxxx

¶ That was that day some tyme in age
Within the temple by continuance
Sooke by hir self out of marriage
Eare nyght and day in fasting & penance
In byddell abye sad of countenance
And in prayer was hir lesy cure
Whiche in that house of grace or auenture

When crist was there with his moder dere
In the tyme of his oblation
This anna came demure and sad of chere
And vnto hym with grette deuotion
When she hym salbe/fyl on knees down
Recomforted of al her olde smerte
Hym honouryng with al her hoolle herte

Sayd: oppynly that al myght her
Gesse mery and light in your entencion
And eury man be glady and of good chere
For now is borne for our sauacion
He that shal make our redemption
This yonge chyld blessed: more he be
That me hath graunted: his face for to see

And than in soth when eury thyng was doon
After the lawe withouten exception
And than anna and holy symeon
Had of this chyld made declaration
As ye haue herde in conclusion
This chyld & joseph & this mayde free
Retorned: hoom agayn in to galyle

A profitable declamation of the properties of
the Turtl/and the douue
Capitule lxxxvj

n Ow as me semyth in this hys fere
That namyd is the purgacion
Euery man oughte to be glady and mery
And with good herte/and hole entencion
Deuoutely brynge his oblacyon
And offre fyrste the turtl of Innocence
Of wraip mekenes and hertely pacence

And who that hold this offeryng make arpyght
He may not fayle none of sothe wbo
Fyrste shyne in clenness with his chaste lpyght
As the Turtl/and therewith also
Lpyche the douue sothe in wele and wo
His herte daunte so by temperaunce
To boyde rancour/and plant in sufferaunce

And as the Turtl by contemplacyon
For synne soroweth with grete waimentyng
Only for loue of thilke eternal dilectyon
That lasteth ay/ and hath none endyng
And as the byrde shelpyth the comynge
Of gyfte wylowith faste byrdes nelde
Ryght so of vertu with stouard faye of helde

He must exampe of the turtl take
And be wel ware that he not be larye
But lyeue sole wylan he hath lost his make
And in prayer be also solpyrpe
And like alwey that he not be larye
On no careyne of no falschylde
And with al this to take also he

That he his life here ned in luge
But like a tolbar safely aspye
Wher he of herte gader may the guyne
And that he fle not out of compaign
Wapting also the galle of enyge
And that he haue ay indignacion
Of synful lust out of corrupcion

On ony careyn to foster hym and fede
And euermore with al his lesy payne
Escheipng synne hie god and dede
And with the doune spgh and complayne
For his offence/and with wynges steyne
Take his fleght as ferforth as he can
Thowolbe persyte hie/bothe to god and man

And as the doune tucketh eke her make
Only with kyssing whan they to geder gone
So muste he whether he slepe or wake
Thowolbe chastyte set his herte in one
And lyke a doune maketh his nest of stone
This is to sepe among al his plesaunce
He must his flessh daunce with penaunce

And as the doune with her eyen meke
Of kynde aspyeth amyd the Riuer
The halwys shadolbe whan he doth hir seke
Sechng his repast bothe fere and nere
Reght so must he with persyte eyen clere
Amyd the watres ful of woo and serpy
In the walbes of his mortal lyf

The deadly shadolbe of the fende eschele
That wayteth hym with snare large & huge
And to the deth ay doth hym perselle
To trampe hym hie in his deluge
And lyke a doune flee to his refuge
Wher grace only yf he may escape
Or deth tynge hym with his sodayne traie

And who so by cleanness wish the turtel fere
As I before haue made mention
And like a doleue afore his parrie fere
Of dech to eschewe the persecution
And can be meke in tribulacion
I dar recorde it / write it for soch
Truly to god he his offeringe doth

And who that euer lyueth in chastite
And hath enuy enclosed in his herte
He may wel offer what so that he be
To god a turtel / but the doleue nought
Wherefore they must be to god brought
That cleanness by sothfast bryght
Without partynge be anyte with chaite

And sothely than there is no more to seyne
Whan his offeringe and oblation
Is justely made to god of sothe thyng
It is acceptyd of more deuotion
And for to make a shorte dyscription
Of the turtel and the doleues kynde
Redyth thys versis / and ye shal it fynde

Alta petit turtur cantando gentis veniens
Nunciat et caste viuit solus que moratur
pulos nocte fouit mortuorum que fugit
Eterna legat solitat sociata cadavera vitam
Felle carit plangit solam que per oscula tangit
petra dat huic nidum fugit hostis flumine visum
Rostris non sedit geminos pullos bene nutrit

This feste also bothe of more and lesse
Through out the world / in euery region
Called is the feste of chasteclennesse
For sundry skyles / in conclusion
As olde booke make mention
And holw this feste first took his name
So as I can to you I wyl aume

Holb candlemasse first first
The name capricious

1 Omyne when come though his grete renown
Was most shewyng in power & in myght
Every yeste yere by revolation
In februarie upon the first myght
Eke man & chylde with a taper light
Went in the cyte albo & albo a mas
Unto a temple whiche sacred was

To felena of olde fundacion
That moder was to mars omnipotent
In whos honour this processyon
Ordeyned was by grete ayssement
At eche lustre benyng in her entente
That her power and grete worthynesse
Conserued was though helpe of this goddesse

From al asaulte of every aduersarye
Supposyng fully in her oppynyon
That she fortune made deservayre
For to susteyne the honour of her towne
And thorough her helpe and medycacion
That myghty mars to encreas her glorie
In al conquest yatte to hym glorie

For which cause thorough out the cyte
As ye have heere of hygh & lowe estate
Was first ordeyned this solemnyte
In the temple that was consecrate
To felena the goddesse fortunate
Whow helpe of whom they were victorious
And so this custome superstitious

In Rome whilne as myn auctor sayth
Obscured was long/and many a day
But after that they turned to the frenche
But euer in one this rite they kepte alday
For old custonne is hard to put away
And also usage groweth so fast full so
To doo alway that they haue kepte yore

But at the laste pope Sergius
Of the peple seeing this errour
And that the custonne was full pericious
Dyd his deuoyr/and also his labour
That rite to chaunge in to the honour
Of oure lady/soo that this hys feste
From the hysse doune to the wildeste

Euery man and woman in her honde
To the Temple shold a taper bringe
Therwylbe oute the world in euery maner honde
And therewith al make her offryng
After the gospel the prestes hand byssing
With lycht solempne that al myghte it seie
In honour only of the heuen quene

That best may be oure medpatre
To hys sone/that is without fayle
Withe lord and kyng and the imperatryce
Of lond and see of pres and of batayle
Withouten whome no conquest may awayle
For she hath wolber more in sothfastnesse
Than Iebna of Rome the goddesse

And thus this rite was sturly refusyd
By sergius as we haue herd dryue
That was afoore of hem of Rome bydyd
Full many a day in her paynym wyse
Whome to selde al Cristen must despyse
And of candles whan this rite gan passe
Came the name fyrst of Candeleasse

This fete also of ful long age
The name took of the pousoun
Made of Anna and holy Simeon
Were they hym met with gude deuocyon
Brought to the temple to this oblation
As was the talbe custome and vnaunce
Of holy church for a remembrance

Observed forthe fro yere to yere
Of February on the fyrst day
With sacrid lycht vpon taperis cleer
Shynynge as bryght/as plebus in may
Whan the peple/in what they can or may
Ful wryten of one entencion
To make in fygure a presentacion

Of Crist Ihesu with al his ful myght
Sugned/who so can take hede
By the taper/that the offe lycht
For fyrste the waye bytolleth his manhode
The wyke his soule/the fyr his godhode
For as the lye is made of nelbe
Thowld smal seedes of floures fresshe of helbe

Thowld clennesse only and delygent labour
On blossomes gadred/and to hyue brought
Soo Cristes manhode gethe oute of a floure
Whos fresshe haute of colour sadeth nought
For a mayde cleue in wyll and thought
Lycht as lyege of floure soote and glade
Is tryed oute/and doth hem not to fide

So Crist Ihesu conspurynge hys clennesse
His manhode took of a mayde fwe
So standynge hole shurynge in faynesse
With al the fresshe of byrgynesse
And as a taper is one to geve on the
Soo thyll lord/that is bothe the and one
Took fleshe and blood to saue vs eueryone

Of a myght which this day for hallow
Mekely wente to be purposed
To the temple of Jerusalem
As for to forne it is specified
In whose honour this feste is magnified
Of al Cristen men with swette tapers here
To signifye / who so that lyght he cleue

Must offer a taper to geder made of three
Of feyth and werke and twelue entencion
For sothfastely / but they coniointed be
Withoute partyng or deuysyon
Noether his offryng ne oblacyon
Holt saye outward pleyntly that it seme
To god aboue it may neuer queme

And though this taper stenne bright al day
And enuyon make his lyght to shewe
If werke of feyth prolonged be alway
And twelue entent folowe not the dede
Fare wel his guerdon / his mercede & his mede
For whan these three be not knete in one
He nys not able to offryng for to gone

For yf these three to geder be not meynt
Feyth / werke / and hool entencion
His offryng faileth but as a taper queynt
That yueth no lyght / but brightnesse enuyon
For werke of dede from al deuocyon
His offryng is / but yf this three
Be knete in one thowld perfyght bryght

Holt Crye / that art the sothfast holt lyght
The best of man for to entumpe
Downe to wretches / for thy / see so bryght
Lete the forne of thy mercy shene
For here of hye that is a pure gyfte
Which on this day to the temple here
Of mekenes only the for to present

Whom whose prayer had of thy myght
Grant us grace / when we be old
And that we to holde our tapers lyght
To see thy face where that it is told
Seuen chaunders al of pure gold
Fastly with lyght stonde afore thy face
That we to come of mercy graunt us grace

And in this cyle where as he sojourns
Grant us lord whyle that we ben here
In February / as phtus doth retorne
The arauit of his golden spere
Upon this day as fro yere to yere
With tapers fresshe / and bryght torches shene
To kepe and habite in honour of that quene

To whome this feste is in special
Dedycat bothe of more and lasse
Whiche here sit childe in a lytel stalle
Welbene an oxe and a sely asse
And blessid quene this feste of candelmasse
To thy seruauntes helpe and socour be
To kepe and saue from al aduersite

Here endeth the booke of the lyf of our lady
made by dan john lydgate monke of bury
at thyntaunce of the moste crysten kynge /
kynge herry the fyfth

God abyde with us and susteyne the
writs al them / that the shal rede
Or here / praye for us for charite
To pardon me of the wylfulnesse
Of myn empyntynge / not takynge hede
And yf ought be doon to thet plesynge
Say they thesse lylades falslyng

Sancte & Indiuidual trinitati / Ihesu cristi crucifigi
humanitati gloriose beate marie Virgini / sit semp
terna gloria / ab omni creatura / per infinita secul
lorum secula / Amen

Unto the holy and vnderstande thyng
Thre persones in one very godhead
To Ihesu criste crucified humanity
And to our blessed ladyes maydenhead
We geuyn laude and glory in very dede
Of euery creature / what soeuer is in
World withouten ende / amyn say al the

Benedictum sit dulcissime nomen Ihesu cristi / &
gloriosissime marie matris eius in eternu & ultra
Nos cum prole pia benedicat Virgo maria Amen

Blessed be the sweetest name of our lord
Ihesu criste / and most glorious marie
His blessed moder / with eternal accord
More than euer / endure in glory
And with hir make sone for memorie
Blesse be marie / the most holy Virgyn
That be regne in heuen with the orders nyne

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